

SHORTHAND

AND

TYPEWRITING.

BY

DUGALD McKILLOP.

(ILLUSTRATED.)

SKETCH OF SHORTHAND HISTORY; LEARNING THE
ART; SUGGESTIONS TO THE AMANUENSIS.
DESCRIPTION OF THE VARIOUS KINDS OF
REPORTING; TYPEWRITING IN ALL
ITS DETAILS, AND MISCEL-
LANEOUS HINTS.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Preface.....	5
Sketch of the History of Shorthand.....	7
Learning the Art.....	14
The Amanuensis.....	34
The Reporter.....	53
Typewriters and Typewriting.....	70
General Hints.....	91

PREFACE.

This little work is intended to be an honest statement as to what Shorthand and Typewriting are to-day, by one who is a practical writer of Phonography. The design is to give any person who contemplates the study of Shorthand—even though living remote from Shorthand schools—information that will be helpful, and it is hoped that even advanced writers will find reference to these pages interesting and profitable. Almost every good stenographer is beset with inquiries from young people in regard to his profession, and there is no reason why this book should not be utilized in answering some of the questions which would take too much time to cover otherwise.

So far as I know, this is the first effort which has ever been made to give an enquirer an unbiased idea as to the general field of Shorthand work ; also the first time so many illustrations of Typewriting machines, and of apparatus of a kindred character, have been incorporated in one book. It is believed that the use of this little volume as a Dictation Book will be productive of good results.

Unfriendly to no system of shorthand that seeks to lighten the drudgery of labor, and friendly to every mechanism that leads away from the dark ages of the steel pen : with hopes that these pages may deter some young men and women from entering upon a career for which they are unfitted, and incite others to take up a profession where they will shine, the modest effort of some busy hours is hastened on its errand.

THE AUTHOR.

Lynn, Mass.,
July, 1891.



ISAAC PITMAN.

SHORTHAND AND TYPEWRITING.

CHAPTER I.

SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF SHORTHAND.

Brief writing has been practiced from time immemorial. The Romans, not content with giving us an alphabet, are credited with having originated an abbreviated system of longhand or sign-writing, and Cicero is said to have employed several expert writers, “Whom he taught to make certain figures, which did in little and short strokes express a great many words.” The later ages of the world’s history reap the benefit of the inventive talent of the past, and it is certain that the Romans paved the way for the modern systems of shorthand. Ovid declares that Julius Cæsar wrote his history and other memoranda in shorthand, and Seneca in his nintieth Epistle says, “What shall I say of the notes for words, by which, however rapidly a speech may be delivered, the hand follows the quickness of the

tongue. These are the invention of the despised slaves." Tiro, the "freedman" or slave of Cicero, is said to have reduced to order a shorthand system devised by the poet Ennius, by means of which verbatim reporting was attempted. As far as can now be determined, Tiro's was a complex memory system, whereby marks were made to express whole words or sentences.

The Greeks, too, made use of some sort of reportorial combination by means of which rapid long-hand writers, seated at a round table, took down sentences in rotation, each, when through, notifying his right-hand neighbor that it was his turn by an admonitory kick under the table ; indeed there is thought by some writers to be evidence to show that the Greeks really invented the first shorthand system, from whom it was borrowed by the Romans.

Nor should we fail, in passing away from the mythical days of the art, to mention the Egyptian hieroglyphics, which, as a system of sign-writing, can at least claim illegibility, being as meaningless to us as a skilled reporter's notes are to the uninitiated.

In modern times the system of arbitrary shorthand characters, devised by Timothy Bright, about the year 1588, is supposed to have been that first printed and engraved, and it so happened that the glorious Elizabethan Era of English literature also marked the dawn of the Sun of Shorthand, whose

bright beams have been of incalculable aid to literature.

Students of the history of shorthand profess to find three or four distinct epochs in the improvement of the art; the first section from 1602-1682; second, from 1682-1786; third, from 1786-1837, and fourth, from 1837 to the present time.

John Willis first invented a shorthand alphabet, which was published in London in 1602. One defect in this system, as with many another projected system, was that the characters would not readily join to form words or phrases. It is always important for a novice to remember that a comparison of shorthand *alphabets* may be misleading.

During the 17th and 18th centuries some fifty different systems of shorthand were published in England, which gives some indication of the intense longing men had to write as they spoke or thought, "quick as a flash."

Although all honor must be given to the pioneers in the invention of brief methods in writing, yet there is doubtless much truth in the remark of Alexander H. Thompson, who says, "It must be confessed, however, that in no branch of practical science has quackery and ignorance been busier than in this. Hundreds of books are already obtruded upon the public, professing to exhibit the rules and inculcate the art of shorthand that are manifestly got up by designing persons, with no other view than that of gain, and are, consequently,

fit to deceive the unwary. The existence of so many incomplete systems has, perhaps, been a principal impediment to the general diffusion of knowledge."

The history of the evolution of shorthand is most interesting, and the rivalry between various systems continues unabated ; but, as in 1837 the Phonetic system of Isaac Pitman* (who has been called the Father of Phonography) speedily became recognized as an immense advance over all preceding systems, so it may be that amid all the wrangling claimants for precedence in the last quarter of the 19th century some one system—and that the best—will be declared by the public to be the one most worthy to survive. In the meantime it is enough to know that there are a number of excellent systems available to the student, whose adoption by new writers is increasing according to the relative merits of each. Most writers claim that the particular system they use is the best, but all agree that ONE good system is enough for any one person to practically use.

But few traces of the earlier methods of writing survive in actual use, except an improvement on Taylor, and the system of Gurney, but plates exhibiting the shorthand characters used by the majority

* It is claimed by some that phonography was invented by Mr. Phineas Bailey, of Burlington, Vermont, in 1819. It is not the intention in this book to go into a discussion of these matters in detail.

of the first writers are in existence. William Mason (1672-1707) has been styled "the most celebrated shorthand writer of the 17th century," and upon that of Mason the Gurney system was founded, the latter being used to this day under governmental patronage in England.

Prior to 1837, among the most noted stenographic systems, besides those already mentioned, were those of Metcalf (1645), Rich (1669), Lane (1716), Jeake (1748), Lyle (1762), Byrom (1767), Mavor (1780), Taylor and Blanchard (1786), Roe (1802), Doddridge (1805), Harding's improvement on Taylor (1820), and Towndrow (1831).

Of the authors of comparatively recent treatises on the art, we will only name the following:—W. E. Scoville, Andrew J. Graham, Benn Pitman, Jas. E. Munson, D. P. Lindsley, Elias Longley, Alex. M. Bell, W. P. Upham, J. G. Cross, R. L. Eames, W. H. Barlow, Mrs. Eliza Burnz, John Watson, Geo. R. Bishop, C. C. Beale, H. M. Pernin, A. J. Barnes, Alfred Day, Curtis-Haven, Geo. C. Mares, G. G. Allen, Marsh, Scott-Browne, Sloan-Duployan, Gabelsberger, and W. W. Osgoodby.

Happily many of the most eminent authors are yet living, as Thomas Towndrow, Isaac and Benn Pitman, Andrew J. Graham, Elias Longley, Jas. E. Munson, and numerous others. Not a few of the mere practitioners of these systems have become as famous as the originators of them.

The majority of the text-books published by these

authors are amplifications of the phonographic idea, some of them being principally noted for being a re-statement of existing systems. Though incomplete, the list certainly includes the names of the best systems of shorthand the world has ever known, by means of which the most marvellous results have been achieved, and it but remains for the student to make an intelligent choice. It may be added that though distinctive names have been given to many of the modern systems, yet the name of the inventor or publisher is that most commonly applied. Not only do the leading shorthand authors publish textbooks elucidating the principles of their methods of writing, but in many instances there is a complete line of helps in the way of graded books, dictionaries, speed-books, etc., which are printed and arranged with special reference to the needs of the student, either in school or out of it, and it goes without saying that the later products of the press in this particular line are greatly in advance of the earlier productions. Many of the shorthand journals published are also exceedingly valuable in an educational way.

As to the utility of shorthand, once mastered, Mr. Eames, himself an author of a shorthand instruction book, says :

“In this day, so intensely practical in the adaptation of means to ends, shorthand is beginning to assume its rightful place as an indispensable factor among labor saving inventions. Its uses are many and various. For common-placing and extracting

from books read, its speed and facility ensure its employment where longhand would be too slow and tiresome. For memoranda it is a wonderful aid, because being always available it is inviting to the user. To the student it is invaluable in the note-taking of lectures and in extracting. 'It is one of the best possible aids in obtaining a subsequent education.' For young men, while it is a desirable profession in itself, it brings them into personal communion with leading business men, and thus affords a stepping-stone—when required—to a higher position. To ladies it affords fitting employment and a good livelihood, presenting an ever widening field for their special ability. To the lawyer it is valuable for noting down references, recording testimony, and making the first drafts of legal papers. To the clergyman and public speaker it saves three-fourths of the time required to copy manuscript, and is an incentive to clear and forcible composition. As a business, it is, to day, an indispensable adjunct in the court-room, the committee-room, the convention, the society, the legislature, the lecture-room and the church; it has made itself necessary in the railroad office, the insurance office, the mercantile and manufacturing house, and in all the departments of the government. The demand for it is daily increasing, as its great usefulness is becoming more generally known and appreciated."

CHAPTER II.

LEARNING THE ART.

Shorthand is the art of writing the words of a language by means of brief characters.

Stenographic shorthand consists of brief characters representing ordinary alphabetical letters, and is now but little used.

Phonography, or phonographic shorthand is written by sound without reference to the alphabetical letters, and is, to a considerable extent, written naturally, i. e., broad sounds are represented by heavy geometrical signs, and *vice versa*. In the advanced style of phonographic writing the characters are written with reference to consonant outline only, so that phonography is really a system of writing a language by consonantal sound. Consonants are, as it were, the trunk and main branches of the shorthand tree, vowels being the smaller branches and leaves.

A shorthand amanuensis is a person who is employed to take letters, etc., in shorthand from dictation, and then transcribe the same on a writing machine or with a pen. After the matter has been written out, all that remains for the dictator to do is

A good idea of what shorthand looks like can be obtained by an inspection of the page of engraved shorthand presented herewith. The shorthand is written practically in the reporting style, but absolute mechanical perfection is not claimed for it. Outlines vary with different systems.

(Key.)

LYNN, MASS., July 1, 1891.

Dear Friend :

I am in receipt of your letter of inquiry, in regard to your taking up the study of shorthand. You are, you say, possessed of a good education, have good health and a will to work. Let me say, then, that I think you have a good start. It is refreshing also to learn that you are willing to devote the necessary time to become thoroughly proficient in the art of writing shorthand. At this point many fail.

Advice is plentiful, and people in general complain that the market for it is dull, with lower prices threatening. Yet you ask my advice Very well !! but will you follow it?

1. Take up shorthand because you are fond of writing. Otherwise you will be likely to quarrel with it after the novelty wears off.
2. Take it up as a life business.
3. Never get discouraged, or rest content with doing less than your very best.
4. Listen, if you must, to many claims of many men for many systems, but pursue your changeless course.

You need not be afraid, my young friend, that there is lack of room at the top, though you may be pardoned for feeling dreadfully frightened lest you will never get to the top. Shorthand study can hardly be called a holiday pastime, or its application in business pure recreation. You will, therefore, do well to lay in a good supply of determination at the outset.

Hoping you will succeed, I am,

Very truly yours,

76 MYRTLE ST.

DUGALD MCKILLOP.

to read over and sign the papers. An amanuensis should have a speed of from 80 to 100 words a minute. Amanuenses are employed to write business correspondence, do copying, transcribe matter for the press, etc.

The shorthand reporter is called upon to do the more difficult work of verbatim reporting, and his services are called for in the court-room, at public meetings, in newspaper work, in taking depositions, etc. For this work the highest skill is required, and a speed of 200 words a minute is none too high for a phonographic reporter, although of course, he is seldom called upon to write so fast for any length of time. In subsequent chapters the "Amanuensis" and "Reporter" are considered more at length.

By a beautiful combination of straight lines and curves, phonetic writing is made, in an exceedingly brief way, to represent the words of a language. A tolerable analysis of the phonographic characters may be made in this way: Make light-line figure of wheel with eight spokes, knock out four spokes; divide rim first into four equal parts beginning at any one spoke; again divide into four parts beginning at spoke next to the one from which you first started. The figure now comprises twelve geometrical parts. Now, reproduce figure already made, shading four parts of rim and four spokes and you have twenty distinct phonographic characters, and exactly such as are used in all the Pitmanic systems

of phonography. Four more signs can be made by shading other parts of the rim, so that these two simple diagrams (which can be made by anyone) comprise at least four-fifths of the basic phonographic symbols. The various combinations of the strokes make up the consonantal outlines of words. The vowels are inserted by means of dots and dashes placed near to the consonant strokes, there being three light and three heavy dots, and three light and three heavy dashes. The consonants are written according to their vowel sound in first position, above the line of writing ; second position, on the line ; and third position, through or below the line.

In passing, it may be remarked that the beginner of the study of shorthand is apt to inquire why it is if the vowels are dropped out of the reporting style and the consonants only represented, that they are not at first dispensed with and the trouble of learning to make and place the vowels saved. The answer to this natural inquiry is that the vowels are really written to a large extent in the reporting style by implication, and the most experienced Pitmanic writers, perhaps unconsciously, write guided by the vowel sounds, and of course what was written in position on purpose is read on the same principle. As to dropping the vowel sounds and starting with consonant outline only in such systems as Graham, Pitman or Munson, it is clearly out of the question. If the student starts on any shorthand

old-school system we advise that he learn the corresponding style thoroughly, and that he familiarize himself so well with this style of writing that he can easily read any matter that is freely vocalized. In consequence of exhaustive drill in the easy style of phonography any subsequent expertness will be the more easily acquired.

For those authors who have—whether for revenue only, or from purely philanthropic motives—striven in recent treatises to shorten up the path that leads to phonographic expertness we have only words of praise. The effort to invent a system with only an advanced style is a laudable one, as is also the endeavor to devise means for at once conserving brevity and legibility, and yet write both vowel and consonant. In the ultimate outcome of the efforts put forth in these years to improve methods we have the utmost confidence of good results, and, as some one has said, “believe that there will yet come forth a system which will give the reporter full use of the sounds that strike his ear.” Every new light is not an arc light, however, and every claimant does not deserve a crown, and until the time-proven best arrives, the ordinary student (and this may include the gentle reader) must be gladly content to avail himself of the wonderfully good now ready to hand.

After considerable facility in joining the characters and reading them has been attained, various expedients and memory methods are adopted for

shortening up even this brief method of sound-writing, so that the experienced phonographic reporter does not write full outlines, but resorts to special contractions, phrasing and word-signs to assist his speed. It is this part of the drill that is apt to perplex, and perhaps discourage, the pupil who finds that not only is swiftness of hand necessary but also swiftness of mind to sandwich in the contractions and expedients in their proper places. Thousands who have been delighted with the elements of sound-writing have become disheartened and allowed themselves to lag to the rear when confronted with the task of memorizing so many arbitrary expedients, and when they fully began to realize the amount of tedious practice needed to make them verbatim reporters. Those who care to do nothing but things that are easy had better not try their lazy hands in forming shorthand characters, or they will surely give up at the critical point between fine theory and vulgar practice. No difficulty lies in the way, however, that is not readily surmountable by ardent and ambitious minds. Ten people have at some time in their lives had a smattering of shorthand to one who has made it his slave and most obedient and useful servant. It follows, therefore, that while professional reporters are no more clever by nature than other mortals, yet they must all be credited with a fair share of perseverance or they never would have qualified as reporters. The luscious elements of phonography will only continue

to taste sweetly to the sons and daughters of the land whose faculty of Continuity is well developed. Nothing can be gained by underestimating the amount of toil required to master the scientific art.

We will suppose that the student takes up one of the phonographic systems whose acquirement to the extent of writing 100 words per minute will take nine months. The time would, perhaps, be taken up somewhat as follows : First month and a-half learning the corresponding style, or in other words the consonant alphabet, its combinations ; the vowels, their position : the next two months in the amplification of the principles and attention to the exception to general rules, which are important though tedious lines of study. The next month will, perhaps, be largely devoted to the learning of grammalogues and word-signs. The latter part of the nine month period will be devoted to writing "new matter," learning to read outlines written in some haste, applying all the rules and principles already learned, adopting expedients and contractions, getting some idea of common business methods of correspondence, feeling at home in the use of the typewriter, and thoroughly reviewing what has been gone over.

This division of work for any number of months will vary in each individual case, the only intention here being to indicate about what may be expected. During this time the student should be unremitting in his or her effort to master the operation of some

good typewriting machine, useful hints in regard to which will be found in another chapter.

Instead of looking ahead in dismay at having to spend over half a year in study and effort, the student should be thankful that such a beautiful art can be compassed in a reasonable time, and for the possession of a mind that aspires to its acquirement.

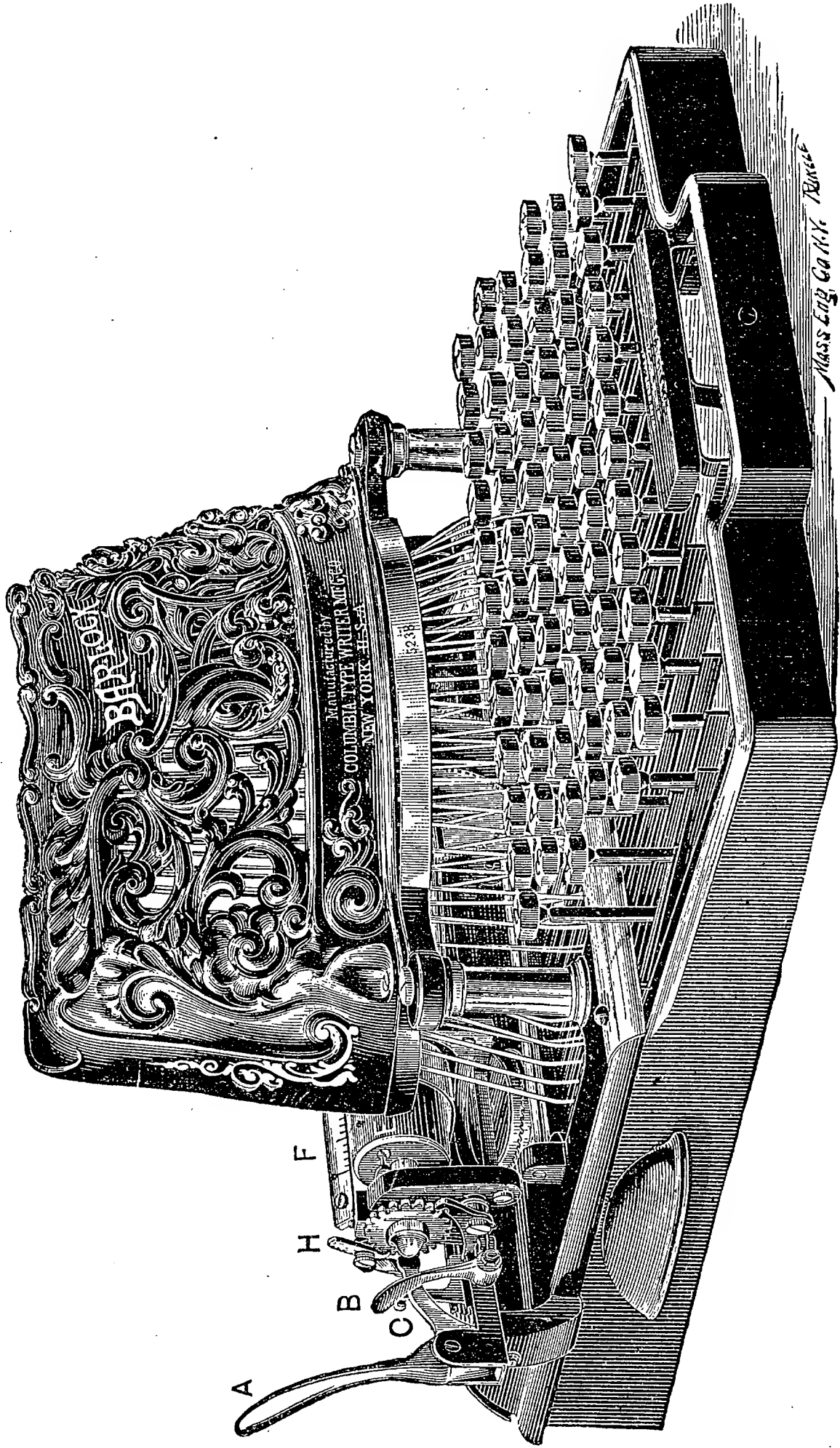
Of course, should the above named proficiency of 100 words a minute in nine months represent a fair average of what the ordinary student may expect to do, it will be understood that 100 words a minute may mean a good deal more for one student than for another. The thorough student will be able to write at this rate in good, legible characters that could be read with tolerable facility by any expert using the same system. He does nothing by guesswork, and besides having all the word-signs at finger ends can read his notes with almost absolute exactness, and transcribe them in proper business-like shape. A speed of one hundred words a minute in this way is far better than a nominal speed of one hundred and fifty words a minute written in ungainly and unreadable outlines whose significance is entirely wanting to any other writer, and only half guessed at by the writer himself.

It is not affirmed that no person ever attained higher speed in nine months time, as we have personally known of a young lady who in about one third of the time named learned what is acknowledged to be the briefest of all systems, and the most

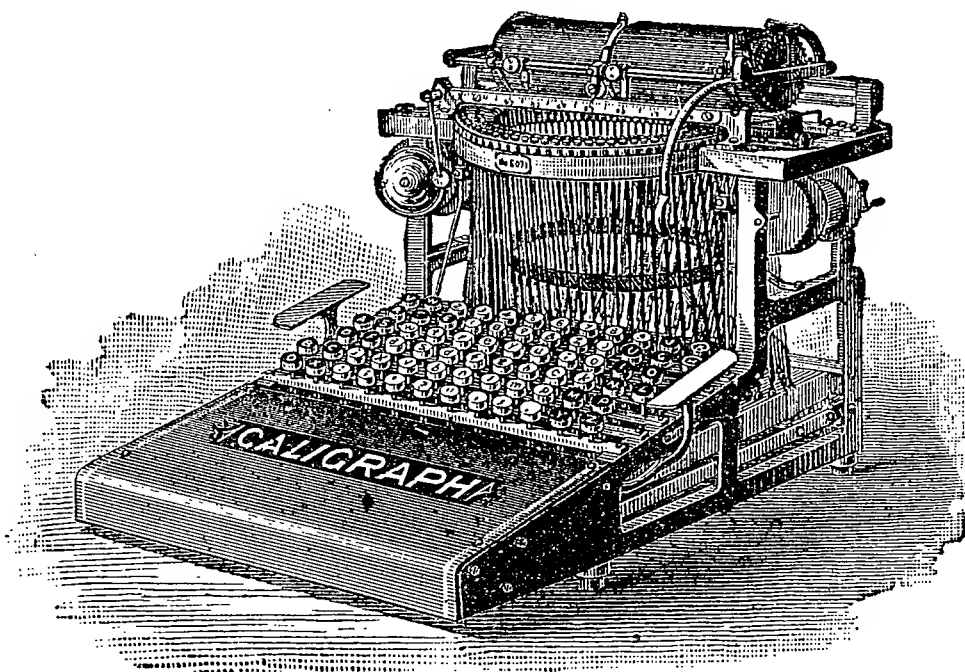
complex as to rules. This young lady took a position as amanuensis almost immediately after learning the art, and we believe she filled the place to the entire satisfaction of her employers. We have also heard of a boy who was a thorough linguist and ready for college at thirteen years of age, but our hints in these pages are for ordinary and not for extraordinary people. It is not improbable that some of the teachers of new modifications and systems of stenography can shorten the time of learning, as they claim, but the majority of those now successfully practising had not the advantage of these alleged short-cuts, and we must be historically accurate in these pages. We do know that in determined hands the celebrated leading systems have proven equal to every demand in rapid, technical reporting, but the results which have challenged the admiration of the world in the hands of these men have been attained by practice, PRACTICE, PRACTICE.

There is no trick in learning shorthand any more than there is in acquiring German, or studying mathematics. Application to the study of some good system is the keynote of success. "Yes, but will it ensure success"? asks the enquirer, who perhaps may be a youth ambitious and energetic, and who feels morally certain that he can in some line find a vocation more pleasant and remunerative than his present one.

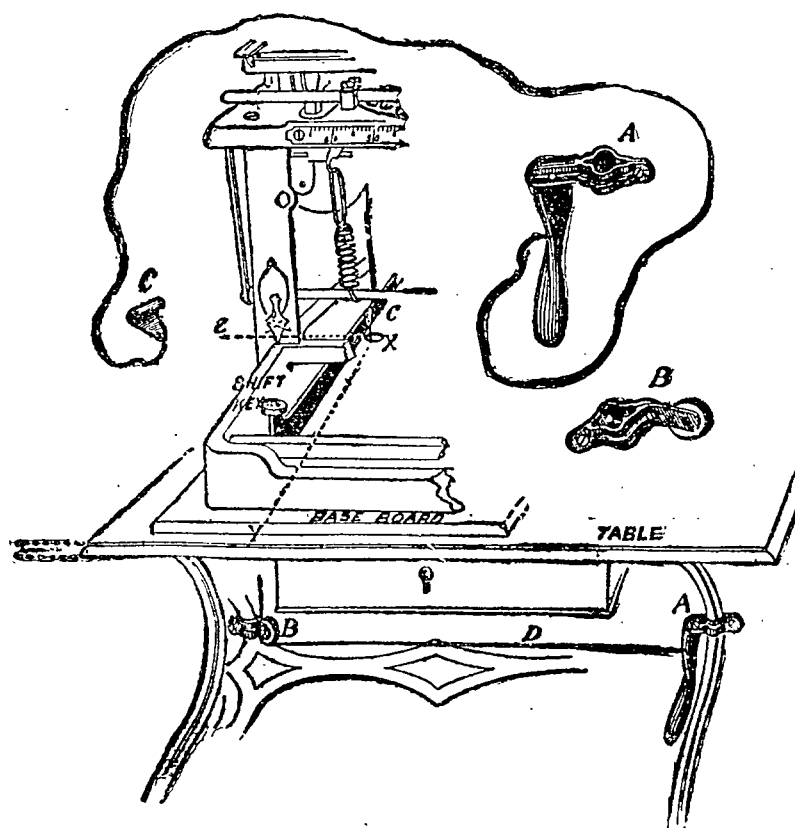
First of all, as to remuneration, it must be noted



THE BAR-LOCK TYPEWRITER.



THE CALIGRAPH.



THE BATES TORREY KNEE-SHIFT.

that a professional shorthand writer depends for his living on the commercial value of his art, whether it be in the capacity of amanuensis or court reporter, and sells so much skill and ability for so much money. It is just at this point that the hosts who contemplate taking up shorthand are liable to make a serious mistake. Perhaps young men or women who receive fair returns for their labor but are ambitious to do better, have put into their hands the flaming prospectus of the "Skewgee Shorthand School" teaching the "Lightning System of Rapid Writing," that claims to turn out court reporters in two or three months—guaranteeing all pupils positions at salaries ranging from \$2000 to \$5000 per year. Now before writing to the "Principal" of that shorthand school to ascertain how much board costs in his city, and when you can begin to attend his wonderful Institution, just calmly consider the matter, for it does not make so much difference how green one may be as to the wiles and ways of this wicked world, if only his greenness is offset with caution and common sense.

Ponder, first, the fact that there are over one hundred thousand words in the English language, almost any one of which, if you become a stenographer, you may be called upon to write in shorthand; although of course less than 1000 words will constitute the bulk of your writing. To write in any form, short or long, the words commonly used, will require an effort. It will not help matters much when you

read in the circulars of the quack shorthand teacher (what would quacks do if it were not for "circulars?") that his system is made up of a few elemental principles whose acquirement is easy, and all other words are written in analogy; as it stands to reason that as long as words are different, whether in sense, sound or spelling, there must be some method used to express that difference in writing. Either by consonant or vowel signs, by implication of position, by position itself, or by memory, the difference between written words must be recognizable. As any shorthand writer knows, the very fact that different words are written in an analogous way may in itself become a hindrance rather than a help when it comes to reading shorthand notes, and the end to be attained in all writing is that it may be read.

Next, remember, that other things being equal, the trades and professions whose acquirement is most difficult are those that are best paid, and if men are receiving large salaries in the noble profession of shorthand, it is because they are earning the premium on their ability to do a difficult thing. If it were such an easy thing to do the work for which a court reporter receives a fat salary that any bright youth, after three months special training, could do it equally well, it is very evident that the reporter's place would be underbid, and the work would be taken hold of by some of the numerous young men of the land who are "willing to do anything for an honest living," and at a figure far below that demand-

ed by the old professional. To the youth who aspires to study shorthand because of its money making possibilities and certainties, we would say, remember, that if stenographers are receiving comparatively large salaries (which is not always the case) they are well paid because their work is difficult, not because it is easy; and, consider, too, that everything that is difficult in actual practice is difficult to learn, although it is true that there are some things hard to acquire and yet most easy to perform, once learned. Do not be deceived on this point if you contemplate studying shorthand, as the rule has no exceptions in the commercial world that whatever is difficult to do is difficult to learn.

We feel like emphasizing these points because of the specious statements of certain printed matter which we have seen, and so will repeat, that if the best paid professional stenographers are compensated highly for their services it is because they do work that not one in a hundred, even of their own craft, can do. How then can it be supposed that a three or six month's graduate of the best school on earth can compete with old time shorthanders! We may well feel indignant that in the stenographic teaching line, more than in almost any other, there has been a systematic attempt made to dupe the public, with results far from excellent. If any one, then, no matter what system may be taught, assures the young people of this country that he can teach shorthand so that in a very short time his pupils can read

and write shorthand rapidly and accurately he is telling a palpable untruth. As well try to teach French at a glance or chemistry at a sitting. There may, of course, be schools where part of the course is unduly prolonged, which is an evil in another direction, and probably not in agreement with the advertised promises of rapid graduation.

We have referred in this chapter to the monetary aspect of the matter of taking up this study, as it is in view of this consideration that the question is so often asked, "How long will it take to learn shorthand?" So we will not be far astray in answering, "You can learn a good deal about shorthand in a very few months, and probably get hold of all the principles in that length of time, but its scientific application is the study of a lifetime. You may become a stenographer in less than a year, but you cannot become an expert in that length of time."

The exact length of time required to master shorthand can never be determined, and the question as to how many months it will take an individual to become an amanuensis had better be answered by saying, "Give yourself one year, and if the time is shortened up, well and good." It is certain that in less time than one year no writer of any system of phonography or stenography ever yet became so proficient that nothing further remained to be learned in relation to the study.

We do not hear the question asked on all sides as to how long it will take a student to learn Spanish,

arithmetic or algebra. It is generally understood that there are different grades of Spanish scholars and arithmeticians, and it should be as well understood that the same is true of shorthand, and as with the former studies so with the latter study, those who take time to learn thoroughly their particular line become the most proficient. With a fair education as a basis, time and application to a good system are all that is needed, and those who have the means may be safely urged to make the course as thorough as possible and take all the time they can. The pupil may leave school with an ability to write shorthand at about the rate at which longhand is usually written, but such an acquirement will be of no advantage to him in the world of business : he may abandon shorthand study when a speed of eighty words a minute is attained, and enter upon its practice, but if he is so situated that he can do it he better remain under instruction until he can write nicely and read back accurately one hundred and forty words a minute. This would be our advice to any young man or woman who has the money and grit to do it. It is in reality the topping off months in the study of shorthand that tell. How often do we see graduates of colleges and schools taking post-graduate courses, and usually it is to the advantage of such students so to do.

The most important thing for the student to bear in mind is, that learning to write shorthand is not so important as learning to read it. Keeping this in

mind the energetic youth will not commit the mistake of writing hundreds of pages of undecipherable stuff, which is simply no practice at all. Resolve at the outset to firmly adhere to the rule of reading everything taken from dictation, or better still, read over twice what is written once. It must not be thought that this is of no help in learning one to write, as, on the contrary, a thorough course of reading so familiarizes the outlines that the hand instinctively makes the proper strokes.

“Sounds which address the ear are lost and die
In one short hour ; but that which strikes the eye,
Lives long upon the mind, the faithful sight,
Engraves the knowledge with a beam of light.”

Where the metal of the student is most tried is in getting up a good, serviceable rate of speed. A certain amount of hard work is needed to get up to 75 words a minute, but the new principles that have been unfolding have kept the student from feeling that the labor was monotonous. After the elements have been gotten down pat, the employment of the special contractions, phrases and word-signs enables the student to gain so much in speed that he feels that all is smooth sailing ; and as in one month an appreciable amount of speed is gained, it is somewhat naturally concluded that if there be such gain this month there must be a corresponding amount of encouragement next. In a month one may, without feeling surprised, run from a speed of 85 words to 110 words per minute, and yet this same

individual may study hard for two additional months, and then on being timed hardly reach 130 words a minute. This we believe to be a common experience with stenographers and is here stated to forewarn the pupil not to expect the same progress in speed continuously, and he must not, therefore, be discouraged when in reality he is making good progress.

Mr. Barker, a Toronto teacher, has said, "The motto of the successful shorthand student must be 'This one thing I do.' Phonography must [be, for the time, a craze with him. Concerts, excursions, novel reading, skating rinks—everything but bodily and spiritual necessities—are forbidden fruit. All words that reach the eye or ear are to be transformed by the mind into phonographic characters, and the familiar crooks must be ever before the imagination's eye—in the tree branches overhead, the straws under foot, or flying like spider webs in the air. To achieve sure and certain success, the shorthand student should be a temporary crank. By this method of application the art is easily learned; but allow the time and attention to be divided, or protracted unduly, the acquirement is so difficult that on this account alone many thousands who set out eagerly in pursuit of it fall into the 'Slough of Despond,' and get out on the wrong side. There is the usual amount of advertising veracity in the published statements of many of the competing colleges as to the shortness of time

requisite for attaining proficiency in the art. It is the easiest thing possible for the student to learn to write 125, or even 225, words a minute *in a certain way* in three months—aye, three weeks, by the use of any shorthand system whatever ; but tried by a fair test, such a prodigy would be found, like David Copperfield, “staggering about the paper with his imbecile pencil as if it were in a fit.”

Remunerative work that is also pleasant is much sought after, and comparatively few there are that find it. As already stated, almost any person with perseverance may acquire a working knowledge of shorthand, and it is true that expertness in this line is likely to meet with fair compensation.

We would, however, caution the student not to take up the study solely for the purpose of getting rich, as such a result may not be brought about, and not to be satisfied with insufficient preparation. Remember that shorthand is a beautiful art, well worthy of study as an accomplishment merely, and that almost as much scientific skill is required to write shorthand well as to follow any profession, or perform any mechanical work, so that the time and money factors should not be kept too persistently in the foreground. Take such time as you personally need to master your chosen profession, and other things being equal, your reward will be according to your qualifications.

As to the question, “Will application bring success ?” an affirmative general answer may be given,

provided the student takes up the course in stenography with the proper motives necessary to ensure continuance in the study. The following chapter will give the enquirer a more definite idea as to what the study of shorthand and its application implies.

As to what is the general character of the work after the art is learned, a rather encouraging reply may be given, as the average stenographer's surroundings are quite enviable. To any one to whom office work is not irksome, the manual part of a stenographer's occupation is not likely to be unpleasant. The opportunities for improving the mind in connection with the actual every-day practice, are at least equal—and often superior—to that afforded to clerks in general.

While it is true in many things that "practice makes perfect," it is particularly true that the real business practice of stenography is the best school of all for ambitious writers, and any such who takes pride in his work will find his position, though sometimes difficult, yet thoroughly delightful. Of course, if the writer "hates shorthand," and only employs it as a means of money-getting, the use of the art will be a hardship indeed, and no one not thoroughly in love with shorthand as a pastime is to be congratulated upon having taken hold of its practice as a business. It is certainly a card in favor of the stenographer's calling, that every day there is something new to learn, and that there is a

continual spur to the ardent mind. That a mutual benefit accrues from this necessity to be wide-awake is indisputable ; it takes some responsibility off the hands of the dictator, and helps to develop the business instincts of the one dictated to. To write shorthand well requires an alert mind ; to write with a typewriter requires the utmost precision of action.

As the writer listens to his dictator he must listen with all his ears, as if he only half listens he may get quite at sea when he tries to make sense of his notes ; thus concentration of mind must be a daily exercise. Again, the regular routine of a writer's work is well calculated to strengthen the memory, as so much has to be carried in the head while hand and head co-operate in labor. In following a slow, steady speaker the number of words an experienced stenographer can carry in his head is marvellous, and the work of every day is a severe test and sharpener of memory. We have used the word "routine," but strictly speaking there is no routine in a shorthanders work, and the mind-improving, superiority of an occupation that causes those engaged in it to act by judgment and not by rule, over other lines of labor whose chief characteristic is monotony, must be evident to all.

As already indicated the stenographic profession should be one that brings to its ranks only those who would be willing to write shorthand all their days. At the same time, young men and women stenographers have exceptionally good chances for

advancement. The most closely guarded secrets of the firm are usually unfolded to the stenographer before he is a month in his position. To him is entrusted the writing of correspondence and the copying of data that makes the position that of a private secretary in reality, though not in name ; and it is the wise taking hold of the experience thus afforded that makes shorthand such an excellent stepping-stone in life, oftentimes. Of course, every one has not a good chance of promotion in this line, but the outlook is more favorable on the average than for a book-keeper or general clerk. If the first position the stenographer is called to fill does not offer many advantages inherent in itself, or prospectively, the possibility is that it will throw the young writer in contact with some parties through whom a better—and a typically good—stenographic place may be obtained, and it may be set down as a settled thing that if the writer is competent he will be liable to find his surroundings mentally improving (no matter how hard he is worked), his position fairly remunerative, and his prospects of future advancement passably hopeful. No glamor, however, will do away with the fact that on the path that leads to stenographic success there grow some thorn trees, or with the truth that good “stepping-stone” positions are earned by hard work and some drudgery, and yet it is not disappointing to know that along the hieroglyphic road there are unusual compensations which need not be held out as a bait

to right minds, and are incentives to earnest and hard-working youth of both sexes. Do not take up shorthand as a stepping-stone to higher things, but taking it up for higher considerations remember that it is not without value as a ladder leading towards SUCCESS.

CHAPTER III.

THE AMANUENSIS.

During the last ten years there has been an evolution going on in the methods of correspondence, which, taken in its outcome, amounts to a real revolution. Business men who have an extensive correspondence ; literary people who find it easy to compose articles and books, but drudgery to write them ; public officials who write an execrable hand, but must keep up appearances ; and many others in all walks of life, have gradually become aware of two facts that are to day distinctly, and almost universally, recognized :—

1. That by means of shorthand, writing can be done RAPIDLY.

2. That by means of a machine in the hands of the shorthanders, writing can be made BEAUTIFUL.

The art of shorthand writing, even within the memory of men now in the prime of life, was popularly considered a mystical and almost impossible attainment. True, every city of any considerable size had within its boundaries, even twenty-five years ago, one or more writers who were able accurately to take down speeches verbatim, and these

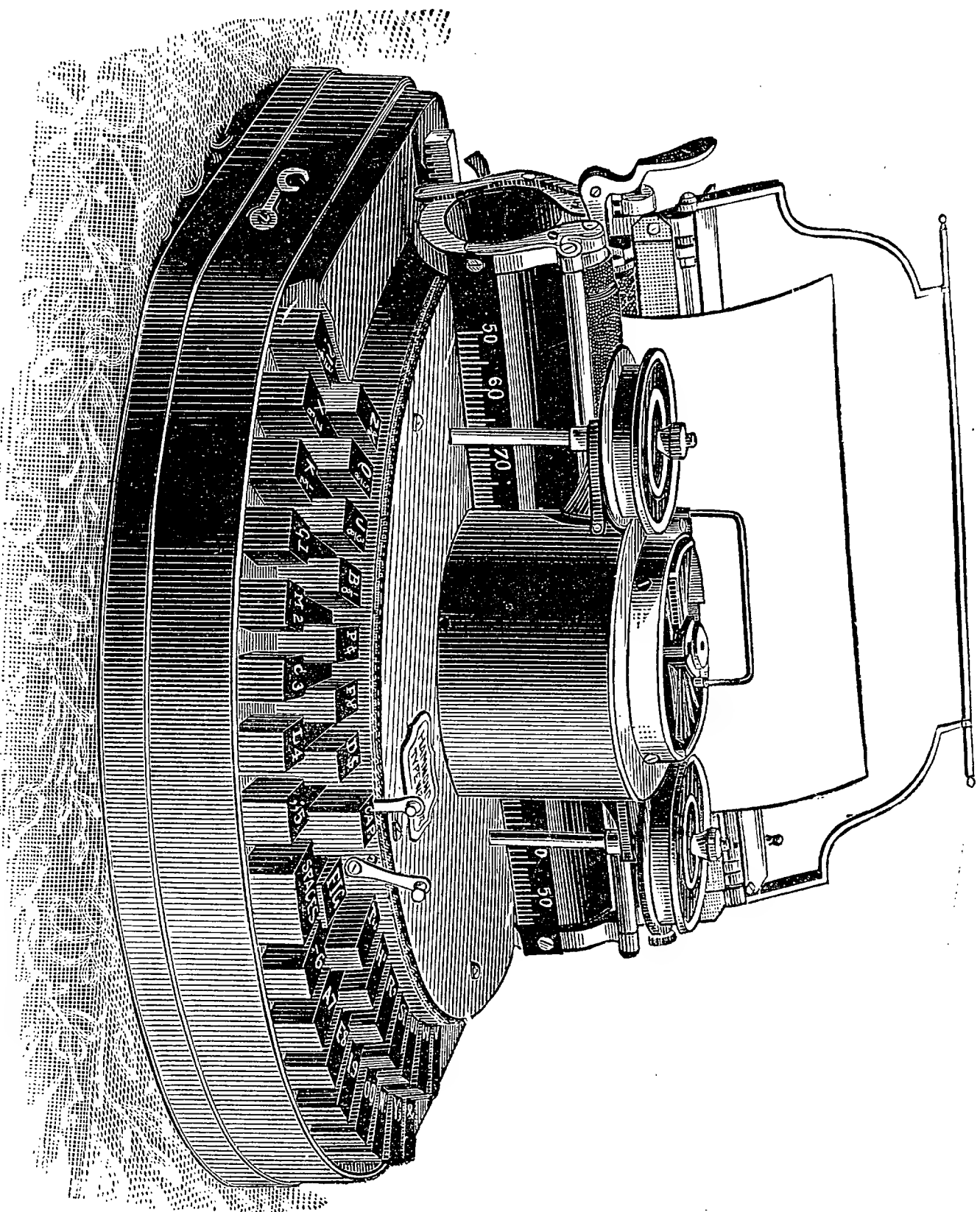
men were looked upon as possessing almost miraculous ability, though as a matter of fact almost any one of those who gazed at the professional reporter in open-mouthed astonishment could himself have performed the same supposed feats of legerdemain, provided sufficient study and practice had been undergone. Demand creates supply. The proven fact that in the hands of skillful practitioners letters could be written rapidly—very rapidly indeed as compared with the old way—on the typewriter, and also written accurately and handsomely, created a demand for men and women who would undertake for a compensation to do this kind of work. Shorthand writers were not unknown, as we have stated, but how to utilize the art in the great world of business, as well as in the court-room and on the platform, is the nut that has been cracked by this generation. We must have stenographers to assist us in disposing of our heavy and irksome correspondence, said the few wide-awake business men of one or two decades ago. All honor to those progressive spirits who, seeing the advantage to be possessed, were brave enough to take hold of it. Pioneers are always educators, and those who first employed stenographic help, educated the public to appreciate the use of shorthand in business. All reforms move slowly, but a step taken in advance is seldom retraced. The custom of employing stenographic amanuenses gained ground quite slowly : it was a novel idea in business, and undoubtedly was taken

up by some as an experiment only, the usages of the past standing in the way of any very rapid growth. Merit wins, and in due time the amanuenses system found general favor.

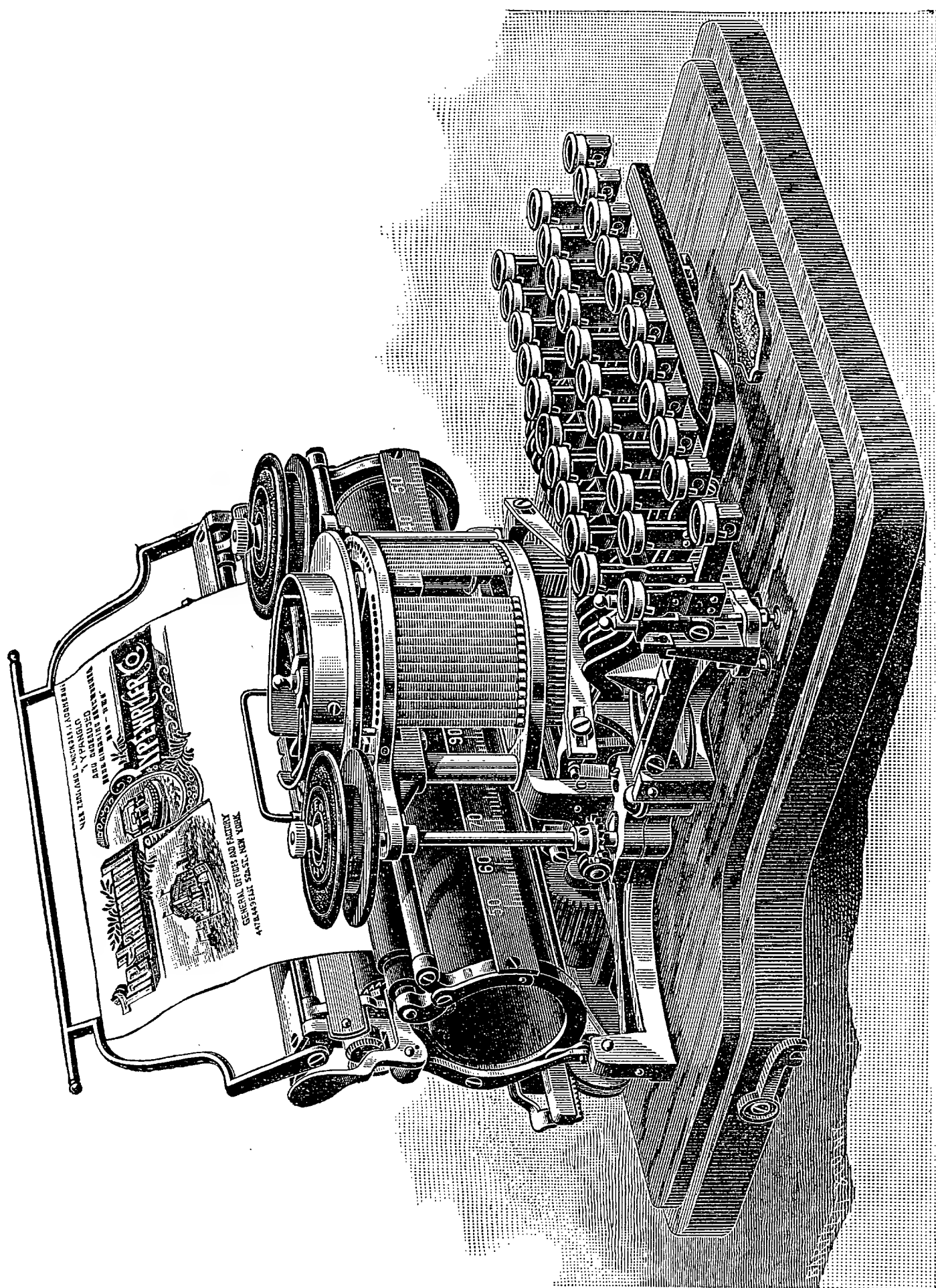
Some of the objections urged against the use of the typewriter in office work are really laughable. One instance only will suffice—a personal recollection of the author. When studying shorthand, and before he had yet mastered it, he was one day called upon to do some easy transcription for a business house. At the close of the day one of the firm told him that he guessed they would be unable to continue employing stenographic help as the noise of the writing machine was distasteful to his partner. Many similar anecdotes not yet hoary with age might be told as a reminder of the fact that in many parts of the country the stenographer with his outfit are curiosities to this day.

The demand for shorthand writers for office work has grown so rapidly that requisitions come from every quarter for young men and women qualified to fill positions, and the numerous excellent schools making a specialty of fitting youth to undertake work in this direction, have been well patronized during these later years. In addition to those who are able to take advantage of a regular course in schools, there are hundreds who are taking up the study in private, and the aim of this chapter is to give some practical hints to both classes.

Perhaps the first question that would be asked by



THE HAMMOND, IDEAL KEY-BOARD.



THE HAMMOND, UNIVERSAL KEY-BOARD.

one who is about to take a course of study would be as to the speed needful to fill an office position acceptably. In regard to this query, we feel safe in saying that one hundred words a minute is sufficient for ordinary amanuensis work. In saying this we do not mean that if a familiar piece of matter is written at the rate of one hundred words a minute, and then half guessed back in reading, that the writer is equipped for the battle of business, but simply mean that an average speed of one hundred words a minute of new matter, well written and correctly read back is sufficient. Coupled with this pencil ability there should be a speed of from thirty to sixty words copying speed on the typewriter.

Should these pages be read by some disconsolate student, who feels that his speed is not sufficient for a trial position, he should remember that there is a good deal in getting the run of the business, as there is a great uniformity in the matter dictated in any one office. Is the man a manufacturer, he will repeat day after day the names of the articles and the parts thereof which he makes; if an insurance man he will have a set of stock phrases that once learned are learned for good; if the employer is a dealer in merchandise he will repeat the same names, prices, and business terms over and over again.

Then it is true that feeling at home at his desk will enable the inexperienced to do better work than he would at first in a strange room, and with unfamiliar surroundings. Familiarity with the voice

of the dictator helps the reporter wonderfully in catching and holding sentences. Even a knowledge of the addresses most used by a firm in its correspondence will help the stenographer more than he might be inclined to suppose. Then it sometimes happens that a half dozen different letter-heads are used, the one to be used depending upon the nature of the letter, and only a knowledge of the business relations of the firm or corporation will enable the stenographer, without advice, to judge which letter-head to use in each case.

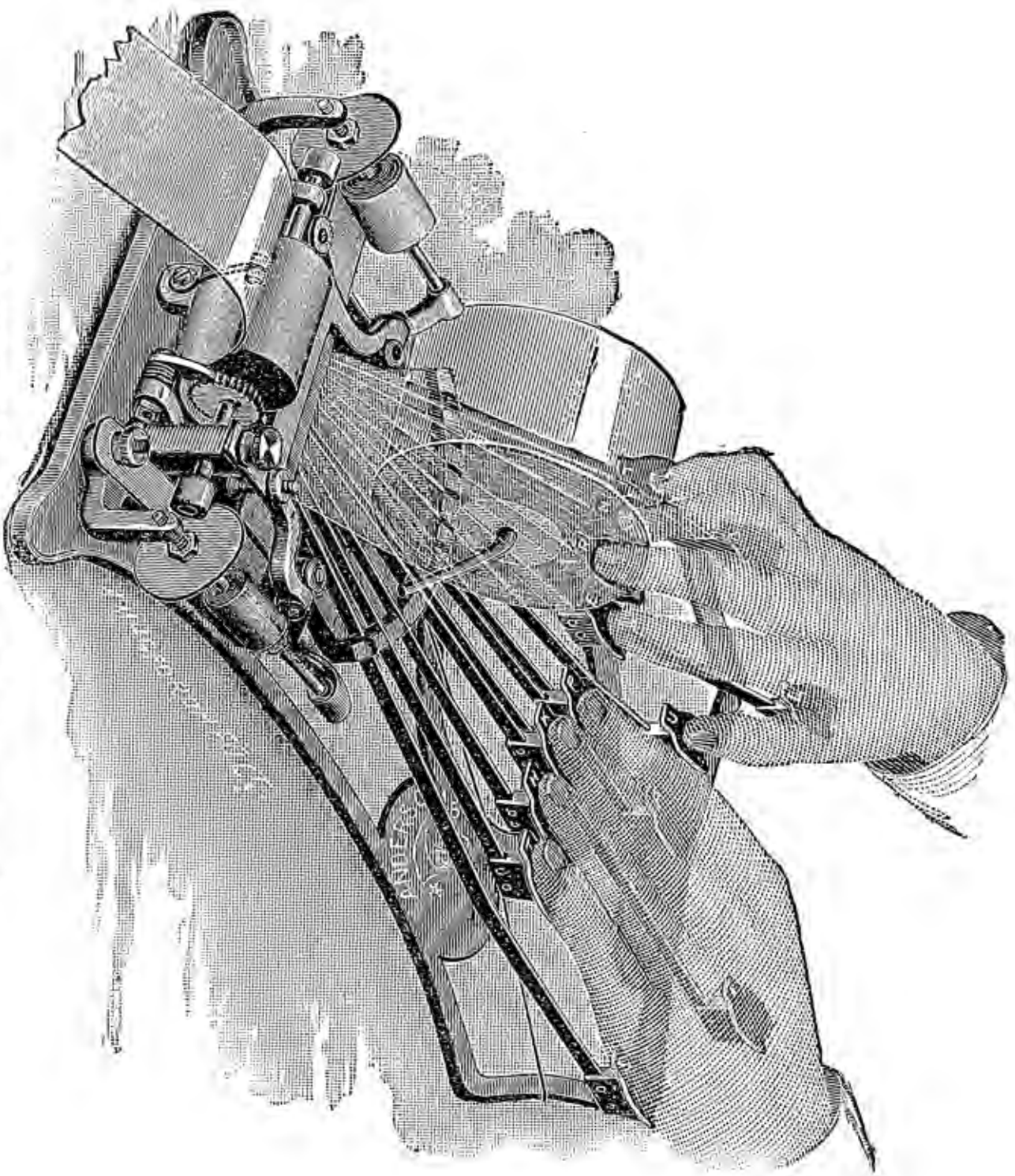
In the matter of asking questions as to what is meant in certain cases, there is a golden mean to be observed between asking too many—and many unnecessary—questions, and asking no questions at all. Upon the whole it is better to ask a few too many questions, than to sullenly blunder into a knowledge of the details of a business. Our advice to the young amanuensis is to ask questions freely, being only studious to ask none that are unnecessary, and always to be careful as to the time when you seek information from your employer and his busy associates. It is no proof of incompetency that a stenographer has at times to ask that a word be repeated ; on the contrary it may be only a proof of a determination on the part of the transcriptionist to guess at nothing. It may possibly be true at times that the fledgling stenographer gets behind in his note-taking because his mind is so much taken up with trying to remember the correct out-

lines of the words that fall upon his ears, and at the same time get them down so that he can read them readily ; in fine, the writer may be deficient in practical speed. But it may also happen with the writer, as with any other individual, that he did not catch the meaning or hear a certain word, how then can he reasonably be expected to make sense out of what he has not heard ? To expect such a thing would be as unreasonable as to ask the stenographer to write out the thoughts of his employer previous to their utterance. A man in New York, who for the last forty years has kept from one to four shorthand writers busy, and has probably dictated more complex literary work in that time than any other man living, has a rule and impresses it on every beginner in his service, however experienced, that in any case of doubt while taking the notes, or afterward in transcribing, the writer is to ask for explanation or repetition if they have to come to him forty times a day, and from practice in that house there has gone forth many of the best writers in the country. And yet such is the system of teaching in vogue in some places that stenographers are called upon to write out a whole jumble of hodge-podge utterances in a sling-slash style, and then are expected to make sense out of the transcription. The trouble with pupils unfortunate enough to be led into such methods of study is that they do not try to make out sensible transcriptions of their practice notes, and when they come to

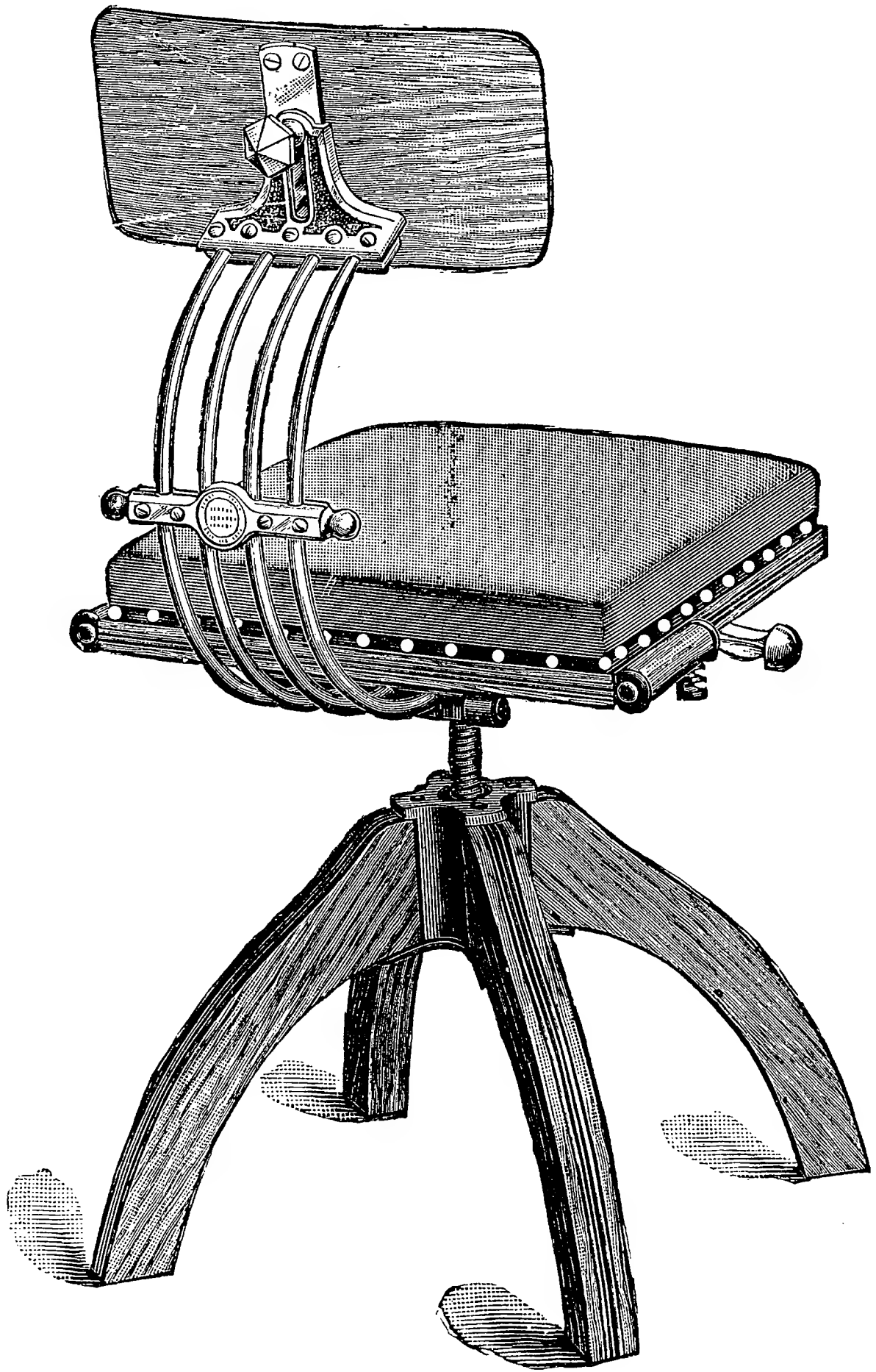
make actual work notes they cannot read them. The trouble with such students is that they entertain the fallacy that has been inculcated into their minds that speed is the main thing, and surety of pen, if slothful, nothing at all ; a soap bubble that gets most ferociously punctured before an incompetent amanuensis is two days in his first trial position, for he soon finds that inaccurate speed in writing means inaccuracy in reading, even though the dictator speaks as a snail might be supposed to. The asking of a question, then, may be an evidence that the writer is a careful and painstaking clerk who would rather be sure of his ground, and then go ahead, than make a trial of a certain word and be corrected on it.

A strong effort should be made from the first to turn in faultless machine copy. It will be found, however, that even the oldest in the profession sometimes lapses from the virtue of perfection, and unaccountable blunders will creep into manuscript. The young amanuensis should not, therefore, feel too badly if he once in a while trips in hearing a name, or even in the spelling of a word, but only resolve all the more earnestly to watch carefully that he fall not into the same blunder more than once.

It will be understood that the first weeks of an amanuensis' life and effort in the field may be beset with difficulties and bewilderments. However, a clear head, courteous manner, and steady effort to



ANDERSON'S SHORTHAND TYPEWRITER.



THE PERFECT CHAIR, NO. 6.

do one's best will usually cause the difficulties to remove and locate themselves upon the next batch of incipient stenographers that swings into line.

Emphasis should be placed on the fact that no one who spells according to Josh Billings should attempt the stenographic line. Young man, if you spell not at all, rather than enlist in the pot-hook brigade go and peddle tinware ; young woman, stick to the washtub rather than essay shorthand if you do not know how to spell. To be sure all are at liberty to try to learn shorthand if they can, but there is one class who should not even covet the position of a shorthand amanuensis, viz., poor spellers. They who attempt to transcribe shorthand notes should be good spellers. By this we do not mean that it is necessary to be a "crack" speller and be able to handle such words as, "Aiguielette," "Ecchymosis" or "Sagittarious," without a moment's hesitation, but rather mean that one should be able to tell the difference between the correct and incorrect spelling of common words. Otherwise you may astonish your employer some day by writing, "I seaze this oppertunity too send reciept, as per your reakwest, and as a gaurantee of good fathe." Poor shorthand notes get an amanuensis into difficulty, and drive him to despair ; lack of speed in transcribing is unfortunate and deplorable ; but nothing seems to be considered such a mark of pure idiocy as does poor spelling.

Another requisite is good hearing. We once knew

a young man of defective hearing who thoughtlessly took up the study of the Munson system of shorthand, and in time by diligent study mastered that excellent system pretty thoroughly, but when it became apparent that it was difficult for him to hear speakers at a public gathering, even when he sat well up in front, the study was abandoned. The great blessing of good hearing lies almost at the foundation of stenographic success.

An old idea held in some quarters of the land was that a man who was too stupid or lazy to make a success of anything else could farm all right. Let no one think that if they can do nothing else that they can surely become stenographers, as they will be certain to meet with disappointment. A fair education, good health, acute powers of hearing, sound common sense, ability to spell, some idea of punctuation and composition, good memory, swiftness of hand and mind, and perseverance in the face of small obstacles, or great ones, are requisites the amanuensis should possess. If you lack any one of these qualifications, do yourself the kindness of acquiring it (if this is possible) before you enlist in the ranks of the shorthand apprentices. There is a fitness in everything. Poor spellers, partially deaf men or women, those who are old or in the decline of life, or those unfortunate enough to lose one of their arms, should hesitate a lifetime before starting on the somewhat rugged path that leads to shorthand felicity.

J. Percival, in the *National Stenographer*, refers thus entertainingly to the railway amanuensis :—

“The quality that perhaps the railroad stenographer has most need of is good hearing, which should include the ability to retain in his mind the words of one voice and exclude the many more and different words spoken at the same time all around him by other voices. If there is one thing that is more trying than another it is to take dictation with the hum of speakers all about you. Aside from that, the dictators range all the way from good to execrable. There is the man who has cavities in his gums where teeth ought to be, which necessitates his lisping or omitting certain words. There is the man who talks in a whisper, or bites off half his words, or mumbles his prepositions indistinguishably. He is probably the most aggravating species to take from. Such important words as ‘from’ and ‘to’ are certain to be slurred over, so that it is impossible to catch them. Mere speed is nothing compared to this sort of thing. A man may be ever so fast so he but articulate plainly, it is all fair sailing; but one who chops off his syllables, even if he talk slowly, is as iron to the spirit.”

Do not run away with the idea that after you have thoroughly mastered shorthand, and can write rapidly and accurately, that there will be no demand for your services. Do not imagine that a more gen-

eral diffusion of a knowledge of shorthand, and the possibility of its becoming a much sought study in our public schools, will, in a commercial sense, operate against professional stenographers, and do not fear that the inevitable advance of science and invention will hurt the stenographer. Narrow-minded teamsters many years ago feared that the introduction of the iron horse would leave nothing for the ordinary horse to do. That objection to railroads is no longer urged. The work for and the number of horses have increased with the railroads. There will, by degrees, be a higher standard required in amanuensis work, and experts will be appreciated at their full value.

Now, as brief writing is such an immense advantage over the slower methods, it is quite probable that the public schools will in due time teach it as a regular course, to the manifest personal advantage in time saving of those who thoroughly master it, but will that militate against stenography as a profession? Not any more than the study in school of English history—which is really the basis of common law—will do away with lawyers. Thousands of young men and women in commercial and other schools are being yearly educated as book-keepers, but does the market become overcrowded with good book-keepers? To a limited extent it doubtless does, and yet many large firms are constantly on the lookout for wide-awake, accurate, and reliable book-keepers, and sigh because they are unable to secure

them. The United States is pre-eminently a country where a man who has a specialty in which he excels can find a position in which to use his ability, provided he with judgment and patience looks for such position and is willing to go where such services as he can render will be appreciated.

The phonograph is too well known to need special description. It has been feared by some that the services of the stenographer would no longer be demanded after the invention became available as a working machine, but whatever the future may develop there is as yet not the slightest fear of the machine superseding the living stenographer to any disastrous extent. We are pleased to be able to exhibit in this volume an illustration of a young lady transcribing from a phonograph, words which had previously been talked into it. Already the sight of amanuenses taking matter as shown in the cut, and writing the same out on a typewriter, is not uncommon. It will at once be seen that if shorthand should receive a backset on account of the phonograph, that typewriting would receive a corresponding impetus, so that even the most gloomy view of the situation from a stenographer's standpoint has its bright aspect. It is without doubt safe to advise anyone who contemplates writing matter from the phonograph to learn shorthand, as in case the machine gets "sick," or what is more likely still, in case the dictator gets sick of the phonograph—the pencil can be brought into active play. For

some kinds of transcription work the phonograph is being found useful as a dictator of what it has received, but for various reasons it is likely to become but a feeble rival in the field of legitimate amanuensis work.

The amanuensis will soon find that he cannot absolutely follow the outlines learned at school, and the chances are that after a year of actual practice his writing habits will be changed considerably, and he will probably phrase only about one-tenth as much as when he graduated. This arises from the fact that there is such a wide difference between theoretical and practical work.

Individuality is manifested in longhand and shorthand writing as in few other things. A person who writes a straggling, tortuous kind of shorthand characters may safely be set down as a careless being in regard to precision in other things. To write beautiful shorthand requires sustained accuracy of hand movement, a memory keen to recollect the correct outlines, and a mind that is not lazy. A page of shorthand manuscript looks very much like nonsense to those who do not understand anything about this style of writing, but an experienced stenographer can see at a glance the beauty, or deformity there may be in the notes, and size up the writer accordingly; of course taking into consideration the speed of the writing, the matter written, and the circumstances surrounding the note-taker.

Some people take to phrasing as a duck takes to

water, others make an effort in this direction with difficulty. Some write beautifully with ease, others care for neither ease of movement or elegance of outline. Phrasing is an art in itself. The best writers phrase but sparingly, claiming, however, that under proper restrictions phrasing is an aid to ease in reading, as it assuredly is to speed in writing.

How excellent it would be if in all shorthand schools the students were compelled to be painstaking in all things, first thoroughly understanding the underlying principles of phonetic writing, and then carefully analysing the accepted rules of phrasing. But the teachers of shorthand are, perhaps, not more to blame than the pupils who enter upon the study with such frantic haste that anything like solid instruction would be lost upon them. The student wants to learn so that he may begin to earn, and, therefore, the text book is thumbed only from a mercenary motive and as a means to an end, and the learner is content if he can but squeeze into the ranks of fledgling amanuenses, whose knowledge of shorthand is as limited as their ignorance of the ordinary methods of business correspondence is unbounded.

There is a popular misconception, in this relation, which we imagine has something to do with the hurry and scramble which young stenographers are in to get positions, it being the idea that a position once secured, where practical work is the order of exercises, speed and accuracy will both be rapidly

developed. Like most misconceptions there is a grain of truth in this idea, and very much depends upon the position which the ambitious writer of pot-hooks is first called to occupy. Once in a while a struggling student of the art, who perhaps sees the dollars at his command growing very few, makes a plunge into the business world, bringing with him a wealth of inexperience in both shorthand, typewriting, and commercial methods that is most shocking to contemplate; but the fates are propitious, and there being but little shorthand work to do, the young man gets through his work in a passable manner, and, by dint of hard study in spare hours, succeeds after a time in getting a good position, which he has become qualified to fill.

The other side (and not an infrequent one) of that picture is that such raw recruits fall prey to exacting dictators, who having been used to experienced help make no allowance for the blunders of the youth who is working for "experience," the result being mutual distraction and dissatisfaction. Yet some persons who are really competent fall into the hands of an exacting and unreasonable dictator and are made to suffer severely.

A young lady of good education and refinement and competent as a stenographer, but quite sensitive and nervous, having been a year employed in solid literary work to the satisfaction of a most experienced dictator, sought a situation in a business house, where the work was supposed to be less

exhaustive. She fell into the hands of a dictator who was abrupt, impatient, chopped his words, jumbled them, was hasty, erratic and domineering, and neither a scholar or gentlemanly. The terms of the business were new to the young lady and his abrupt sentences, uttered in rough gusts, surprised, confused and frightened the reporter, and she in her embarrassment and confusion ventured to ask the repetition of a sentence. He said, "I have no time to repeat. What are you here for if you cannot report?" She asked to be excused for a few moments, put on her hat and ran back to her old place with red face and tearful eyes and asked to be reinstated, was gladly accepted and took twice as many words per minute from one who knew how to think and to dictate, as the crusty business man could dictate. He would put at the rate of 100 words into a quarter of a minute and wait, keeping his writer in nervous suspense, and then belch out another gust of badly pronounced and ungrammatical words. Dictators should attend a school to learn how to dictate, and then we would have many more good reporters, who would not suffer from distraction through incompetency or bad dictation.

We have used the word "distraction" advisedly, as the position of an incompetent amanuensis, who realizes his or her incapacity, is one of the most humiliating in the world. In the first place, an inexperienced and incompetent stenographer is sure

to be nervous, which is begotten through the fear that all that is being dictated will not be gotten down straight even in the shorthand notes, to say nothing of the transcription. There is the double liability of making a mistake in writing the notes and in transcribing them. Then, after the matter, which was written with trepidation and nervousness, is submitted to the critical eye of the clerk or employer who dictated it, the pages are subjected to the closest scrutiny. Unlike longhand writing, in which one letter may be made to stand for another, and ornamental flourishes serve to cover up bad spelling, the whole matter is distinct, so that the least mistake fairly glares and glows upon the page. How absurd and inexcusable a mistake in print does look, and typewriting is simply hand-printing. To be satisfactory the type-written copy should be faultless. Not that some latitude cannot be allowed in the matter of punctuation and paragraphing ; but there must be at least correct spelling, capitalization, division of words, and a tasty form.

Imagine a young stenographer, anxious to please in his first position, handing in to his employer a number of letters that fairly bristle with mistakes. Even should the "boss" do nothing but draw his pen heavily through the sentences here and there, and ask that the letters be rewritten, the agony endured by a sensitive stenographer may be heavy indeed. For a time he may be inclined to lay the

blame for the errors on the shoulders of his dictator, and complain of his indistinct utterance, etc., but further reflection will enable him in most cases to locate the trouble nearer home, and it will be often found that the difficulty lies in the fact that the amanuensis has insufficient speed. Such are the results that sometimes follow in the wake of quick graduation.

We wish that all readers of these pages who are ambitious to become first class amanuenses would take to heart the following advice, which is carefully stated in the light of practical experience and careful reading :

Do not take up the study until you see your way clear to devote a good deal of time to it ; closely investigate the leading systems before choosing one, then do not change systems ; take the study up earnestly and do not stint yourself in the matter of text-books and helps ; avail yourself of the best aid to be had in the way of teaching ; set out expecting discouragements ; do not drop the study when part way through, expecting to take it up again, unless you are positively compelled to do so, but keep right on until you can on correct principles form the outline of any word in the language, after which you can “ play into ” shorthand knowledge ; aim to excel in the manipulation of the typewriting machine before you apply for a position ; subscribe and keep on file the shorthand journal devoted to

your system, or one devoted to the interests of all shorthand writers ; aim high, and with patience, pluck and perseverance you will become an individual by no means to be despised, A SHORTHAND AMANUENSIS.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REPORTER.

It is a mistaken idea to suppose that a knowledge of shorthand is essential in all newspaper reporting. It is true that a thorough knowledge of the art may be of great assistance to a reporter, but it is really surprising how comparatively few speeches are reported in full in the great city daily. That man must indeed have the public ear very attentively who can count on having his speeches reported in full.

Suppose then John Green, who has succeeded in mastering shorthand, perhaps in some quiet village or rural district, finds that hard study and considerable practice have made him so proficient that he can take down verbatim such local speakers as he has tried. Suppose too, that this young man seeks and obtains a position on a city daily (if this is not stretching the possibility of the case too far) his first assignment being to report the proceedings of a mass meeting held in the town of Sergeville, to protest against the bonding of their town for water-works. John is early in attendance at the meeting, and serenely sure he can take the remarks of the most fiery orator of Sergeville

The meeting is called to order at 8 P. M., a chairman is selected, and a Mr. Slocum first called on to address the meeting, which he does in rather a moderate way for about fifteen minutes. John Green takes him like a book, not missing a word, although it does occur even to the youthful reporter that the repetition of the words, "Spread upon the assessment roll of the Thirteenth Ward," eleven times in one short address, was running that phrase rather hard, but John wants to be accurate and each repetition is carefully written, and our hero inly resolves that he will take the speakers word for word and write the addresses out in full so that there can be no cause for complaint on the part of any of the speakers as to not being fully reported.

The next speaker is Senator Bellows, who is received with deafening applause, of which no note is made by Mr. Green, who is intent on getting every syllable of the opening remarks of the distinguished speaker. The Senator is warmed up from start to finish, and it is evident that he has something at stake in a financial way. He is statistical, historical, facetious, and "eloquent," in fact everything but epigrammatical. The Senator speaks for one hour and a half, and speaks well. At the end of the oration John Green finds that his good sized note book is pretty well filled, and decides that it will be quite sufficient for the paper if he hands in the two leading speakers' addresses in full, and so with modest step he hies him to his typewriting

machine and enters with zeal upon his work of transcription, which he finally completes after several hours of the hardest work of his life.

John finds as he goes along that the Senator is very "historical" indeed, and recounts the various efforts made successively in the years 1863, 1871, 1876 and 1891 to filch lucre by way of assessments from the already oppressed and overburdened citizens of Sergeville. The tears almost well up into John's honest eyes as he writes the argument in full, and he thinks complacently of the effect that the perusal of the speech must produce in the community. These reminiscences of attempts at coercive legislation (which only failed of accomplishment because of the timely interference in each case of the Hon. Bellows) take up, when written out, many closely written pages of manuscript, but our young reporter wants the public to get the exact idea of the speaker and puts in all the padding of what really was, in its time and place, a convincing and powerful argument against bonding Sergeville for waterworks.

At length the complete addresses are typed out, and with an explanatory note our reporter leaves them at the office of the powerful journal, whose doors close not night or day, and seeks the rest and refreshment he so much needs.

The next day John buys the first copy he can get of the paper and turns eagerly over the pages for his special report, in which he naturally feels a very

special interest. The report seems to be missing. Here on the first page are a column or two of telegraphic brevities, several unimportant items of local news, a number of new advertisements, and about three columns under a "Scarecrow" heading, as follows :

ESSEX BRIDGE HORROR !

Nancy Smith's Fatal Plunge.

**THE STORY OF HENRIETTA SPROLES WITH WHOM
THE YOUNG WOMEN LODGED.**

SHOCKING PERFIDY OF OLIVER EGGSHELL.

Then followed, all through the paper, column after column of what our disgusted Mr. Green thought extraordinarily ordinary looking miscellaneous matter, but alas, no report of the Sergeville speeches. Turning several colors at once John tosses the paper aside, then in desperation takes it in hand again, when, finally his eye rests on this :

"SERGEVILLE NOTES."

"John D. Harrowspring was violently thrown from his buggy last night when returning from the boisterous town-meeting, and fractured his right arm. Dr. Anderson says Mr. H. will be all right in a day or two.

“The Town-Hall meeting was a lively affair, being addressed by T. Slocum, Hon. Asa Bellows, S. Q. Zera and Dr. Arnold. The concensus of opinion was that the speakers hit the nail on the head when they said, ‘Let Bigtown pay for her own Water-works, for Sergeville certainly will not.’ Quite a breeze was stirred up by Robert Walsh of the Second Ward calling Senator Bellows a ‘turncoat.’ As is well known, Walsh lives outside the taxation line of the proposed bonding assessment. Dr. Arnold made a capital speech. HOBBS.”

Upon his arrival at the office John is told that his report would have taken up four or five unleaded columns. He is further made to understand that Hobbs is the regular reporter for that section, who fearing that Mr. Green might not get it straight sent in a report himself, without however having attended the meeting.

Verbatim reporters are in demand in the cities of our country, but their work is seldom confined to one paper. Some of our most renowned reporters have no knowledge of shorthand whatever, or put what little knowledge of the art which they may have to no practical use. Shorthand is a most useful acquirement in the reportorial profession, but is not indispensable, and we have written the foregoing merely to disabuse the reader’s mind of an idea actually prevalent in some quarters that “reporter” and “shorthand writer” are synonymous.

But though verbatim reporting is not brought into

play to a large extent by the average daily newspaper, it has a wide and ever growing field in other lines of journalism : scientific, religious, trade and technical journals especially demanding complete and accurate reports of addresses, lectures, sermons, etc., reports of which sometimes are only procurable by being taken from the speaker's lips. It is worthy of remark, however, that reporters are usually treated with every courtesy, and the "reporter's table" is an established feature of any well regulated hall.

Court reporting and the reporting of legislative proceedings and convention doings require a small army of equipped writers to be constantly in the field, and the representative reporter of to-day may be thought of as engaged in this kind of work, although not by any means confined thereto.

Rapid writers, capable of taking in shorthand anything that comes along in the shape of distinct English speech, are those who have graduated from the school of experience as slow writers, as oftentimes it has been found that an amanuenses position is but a way-station to more skillful work. Doubtless the lack of ambition on the part of ordinary writers is one reason that "crack" writers are so scarce, and will continue to be scarce.

In regard to the educational qualifications of a reporter, Thomas Allen Reed says : "Properly to fulfill the duties of a reporter requires good natural abilities, and, to say the least, a tolerably good education. Persons not possessed of these advantages,

would, as a rule, be ill prepared to meet the exigencies of a reporter's life. They might possibly obtain occasional employment in some subordinate department of reporting work, but they would in all probability, earn less by it than at their own special calling. I do not wish to be understood as disparaging the practice of the art of reporting by young men of all classes. But there is a great difference between amateur and professional reporting. The former may be made a pleasing pursuit, and will be found useful to all who practice it with moderate care and industry ; the latter can never be followed by an uneducated person without discredit to himself and his employers ; for even if by means of considerable practice he should acquire a fair amount of stenographic power, he will always be liable to blunders of the most absurd character in the transcription of his notes for the press."

A word of warning might be thrown out to those who think the shoving of a reporter's pencil is a free for all kind of profession. It is so far from it that a Kansan judge expressed the exact truth, in passing upon the reasonableness of a stenographer's charge for services, when he stated that probably nine-tenths of the lawyers could never excel as court reporters, and that it needed as much brains and time to become a stenographer of skill as a lawyer of repute. The Kansan judge had known several hundred shorthand writers in his lifetime, but of that number

there were but six known to him who had had the ability to attain to the position of court reporter.

It is difficult for a writer with a speed of one hundred words a minute to improve still further and strike a gait that will enable him to do general reporting. As an evidence of this, it has been stated that at a test made by the Society of Arts, London, in April, 1883, when the highest speed exacted was 150 words a minute, only four reached it out of two hundred and one competitors. In commenting upon this statement, Mr. Ireland, the present official reporter of the House of Representatives, remarks that even a speed of 150 words would be utterly inadequate in the Western courts of the United States, and instances a case in which three Detroit reporters (of which Mr. Ireland was one) took down an average of 167 words per minute for five hours, the rapidity of note-taking often exceeding 200 words a minute. When it is remembered that good authorities place the average rate of deliberative public speaking at from 120 to 130 words per minute, it will be seen what a perfectly marvellous feat a 200 word a minute writer has to do. It is a matter of natural qualifications and steady training combined, and what has been done can be done again.

Not the least necessary thing for a reporter is good health, more particularly in the line of endurance, as reporting is often exhausting to the last degree, and the strain upon a man's vitality is heavy indeed. There are times when the reporter, weary of heart

and tired of hand, would fain rest and lounge as he sees those around him do, but such relaxation is not for him, and he must—as in an important suit—not only keep on working, but also keep up the quality of his work. Close attention is necessary all the way along, so that the stenographer may not only make good notes but also get the sense of the matter being written, and make no such blunder as a writer who in referring to an execution in the “Place de Greve,” wrote it out that he was executed in a plaster grave. The more a man knows the better reporter he is, and he cannot possibly know too much for certain situations in which he may find himself placed. If, for example, a reporter has even a passable knowledge of the French language he can report a political meeting where both French and English speakers have their say ; and even if he does not attempt a verbatim report of the French addresses, yet he will most certainly “scoop” any competing reporters who know nothing of a foreign tongue.

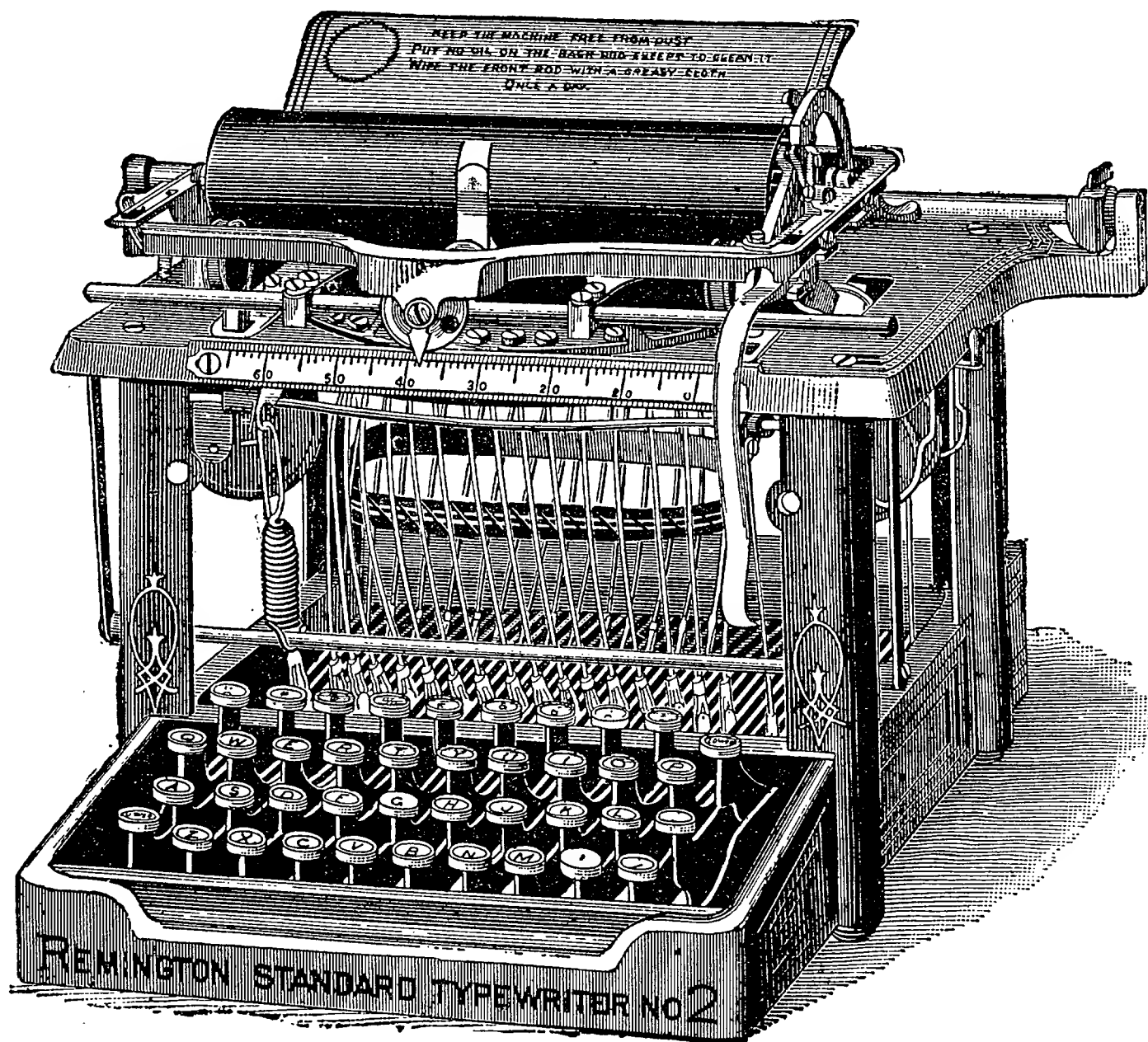
Then, in the reporting of technical matter, where medical terms are used, even a smattering of Latin is a help, and it will sometimes be found that even a slight acquaintance with the peculiar words and terms used in a particular business will aid the writer wonderfully, and enable him to make what he most of all desires—a sensible report. A grammatical inaccuracy is pardonable, but to be laughed at for an absurd mistake is hard for the scribe to bear.

For instance, a stenographer may be called upon

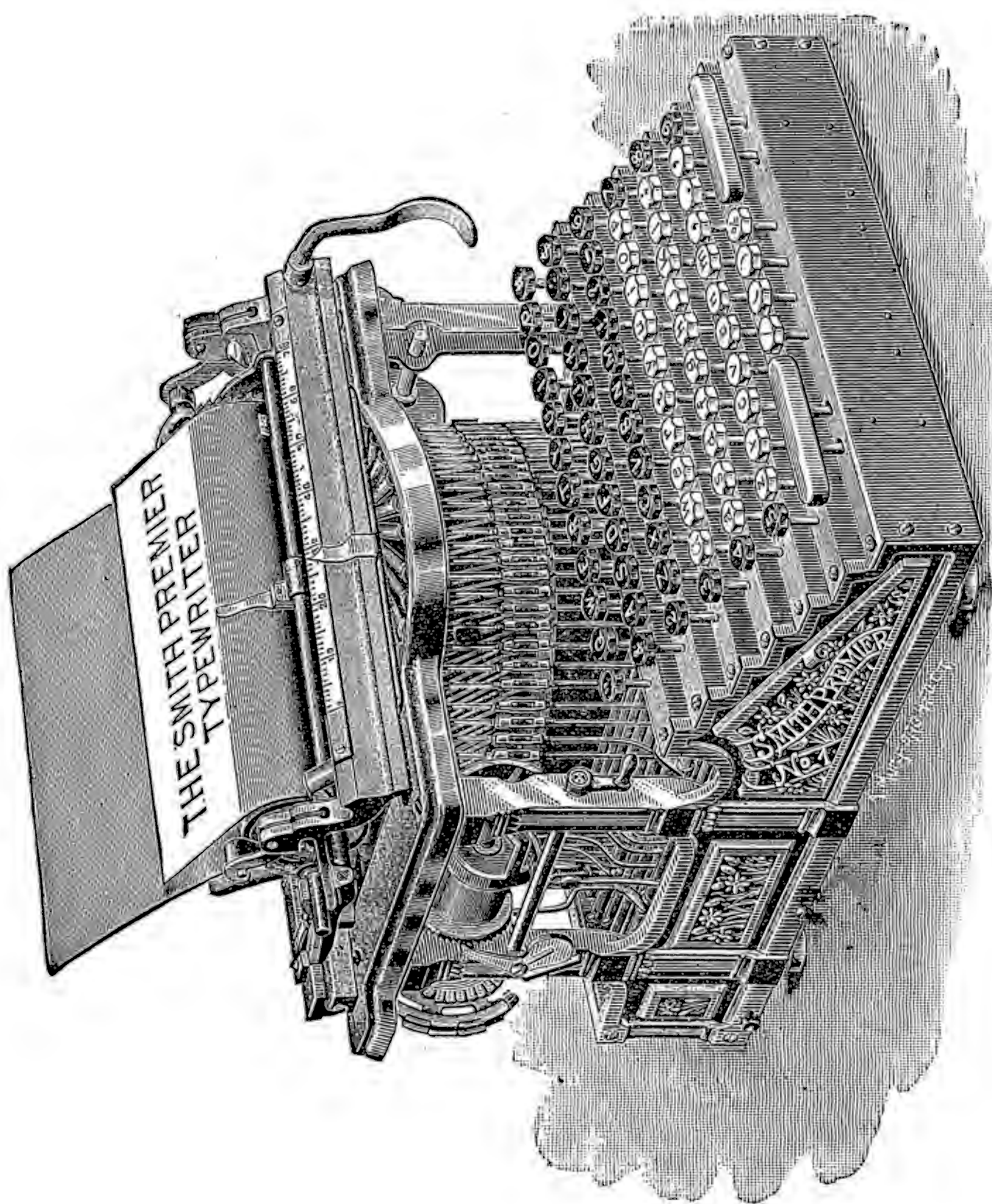
to take down the deposition of some famous electrical expert who talks familiarly and learnedly of "coulomb" and "solenoid," and woe betide the reporter if he makes the witness say "column" and "coal-oil." Such words as shunt, volt, photometer, helix and commutator will flow from the lips of the smooth-tongued electrician, who seems glad to get a chance to talk about these familiar things (to him), but unless the stenographer knows the meaning and spelling of ordinary electrical terms, he may get them mixed in awful confusion, which will be all the more amusing to the witness when reading his own testimony, because he is so much at home in the use of the words and phrases peculiar to the business.

In regard to the compensation of official stenographers, there is so much divergence in the salaries paid in different places, that even an approximate idea of the amounts received can hardly be given here.

Almost every judicial district in the country calls into requisition one or more court stenographers, the laws and regulations relative to the position of the shorthand man, and the compensation he is to receive varying in the different states and territories, though the salary of an official stenographer is usually quite liberal. In addition to his regular fees he stands an excellent chance of nearly doubling his salary by means of additional fees for extra copies of testimony, and then, as court business is not always pressing, there are many times when the



THE REMINGTON TYPEWRITER.



THE SMITH-PREMIER TYPEWRITER.

reporter can busy himself with outside matters of either business or pleasure.

So far there has been no royal road to court reporting, as besides requiring skill in note-taking acquired by long practice, the reporter must necessarily have an adaptation for the work, and an alert ability to accommodate himself to the varying conditions under which he works ; in fact, this remark will forcibly apply to reporters in general. In securing official position a little political influence is well nigh indispensable in case there is competition, but it not infrequently happens that an able writer is asked nothing about his political ideas, and his ability secures him the position.

Some of the official stenographers in large cities have such a wide field to cover that they are compelled to hire numerous assistants ; but as the salary received is in proportion to the amount of labor performed, the division of work among the assistants is really an advantage, as a man of good executive ability can frequently make half a dozen helpers do more and better work collectively than they would be able to do singly.

In these days the phonograph and graphophone are made use of by some official stenographers, who speak from their court notes into the machine, charging cylinder after cylinder with matter which their lady copyists can write out—perhaps when the chief is asleep. Not a few official stenographers have two or more typewritists ready to take the matter as it

is read from the note book, the stenographer starting one copyist on one division of the case, reading to her from that part, and reading to the other copyist from another part of his note book. Such is the facility with which an experienced reporter can do this, that there is hardly a break in the work of transcription for hours, and thus in an incredibly short time, a complete record of testimony is ready for the attorneys. By means of sheets of semi-carbon paper placed between the sheets of white paper, quite a number of copies can be struck off at the same time, and good results by this process of manifolding can be obtained from nearly all writing machines. Thirty manifold copies at a time is claimed for some machines, but the best results are obtained when but few duplicate copies are made.

The opportunity of a court reporter to study law and become educated in legal practice is excellent, and many men graduate into law from the reporter's table. Of course, for many stenographers, the study of law has no particular attractions, but for those who lean in this direction rare chances for practical law study are afforded.

It is a noteworthy fact, that not only are young women fitting themselves in large numbers as amanuenses, but numbers of them have become court reporters, and are satisfactorily filling important positions, and in this, as in every line where there is fair competition, the equality of the sexes in mental ability has been demonstrated. It may also be re-

marked that some of the swiftest typewritists in the world are women.

As to which system is best adapted for verbatim reporting, it is an open question. Certainly no reporter in actual work makes notes similar to those to be found in the text-books of his system, nor indeed does he make his outlines altogether in analogy with the principles laid down by book teachers, for not more marked is the variety of departure in common speech from the pronunciation of words as found in English dictionaries, than is the number of variations in the writing of different stenographers using the same system. The ingenious phrases and laborious curvatures which the student once learned to make so expertly according to "correct principles," are forgotten in the rush and tug of rapid work, and the shading, position and outline of a word must not be examined with microscopic criticism. The words must be gotten down as fast as they are uttered, and if memory prove treacherous for a moment as to the proper outline, the mind must instantly form, and the hand execute, a new one. Thus slight changes creep into the writing, and by degrees the individual stenographer becomes known by some small, and perhaps absurd, peculiarity of his notes.

The fact that the outlines made by a good reporter in fast note-taking are different and less correct than those he would make at leisure, is no proof that the early drill in precision of form, slant, and shading is all thrown away. The general excellence in the

writing of a note-taker well drilled in the corresponding style is preserved in speed work, just as in long-hand there may be lingering traces of "Spencerianism" in the writing of some people who can hardly read their own signatures offhand. So the advice to be painstaking and thorough at the start may be safely and profitably heeded by those who aspire to the 175 word a minute mark.

It will, however, be found true in elementary and advanced shorthand writing alike, that the *faster* an outline is made the better, if well made, and the worst possible heresy a shorthand student could fall into would be to hold that there is virtue in a snail-like movement. A good plan is to make characters well and swiftly from the first ; in fact to get into a sweeping, lightning movement of the hand as soon as possible. This swiftness of action in stroke making, combined with the indispensable muscular movement, will aid the writer, whether student or reporter. It has been found that telegraph operators, who are noted as being rapid writers, take kindly and easily to the swinging movement so necessary in stenographic work. All have not equal ability in every direction, however, and even if an individual found himself in spite of his best efforts to be naturally a slow writer, he should not get discouraged, as practice may in time work wonders, and perhaps an accurate memory as to brief outline, and time saving method, may help the slow writer to keep

even pace with one more rapid of hand but slow of brain.

It sometimes, doubtless, amazes the tyro to think that the reporter can read the scrawls made by the latter, but he learns after a time that the secret of the stenographer's ability and success is that he can read like a book characters that are badly formed, just as a postal clerk can decipher writing that is utterly obscure to an unpracticed reader of long-hand.

The reporter's work, then, consists in applying, all unconsciously to himself, the fatigue-drill elementary principles ; in executing with a manual dexterity only acquired by much practice the advanced forms of brief writing ; in making his ear, hand and thought keep swift and even pace, and, finally, in reading with perfect ease what he has already written, however written. The most important requisites for fast writing are dexterity of hand and swiftness of memory, as neither fingers or brain must for a moment lag ; also, the ability to easily decipher what has been spread on the pages of the note-book, and of the two "tricks" of writing and reading notes it will be found that the former is the more easily acquired and the latter the more important.

The life of a reporter may be a "dog's life," as an official court reporter who earned a salary of \$3,000 a year once told the writer, but yet it is an existence that has its rare delights, and those who

mount highest on the ladder of proficiency, may expect to have the best and most profitable time. To reach such a height requires the closest application of even men of genius, but that the rewards are great and that there will continue to be plenty of room at the top is unquestionable. A man who is master of the situation generally does have a good time, and there is beyond cavil a keen and exquisite delight in a stenographer feeling that he has had such a varied experience with all kinds of speakers—fast and slow, clear and guttural—that he now cares not who comes along, he can “take him,” and he really enjoys chasing down with his Dixon or Waterman a tearing fast speech. Success is its own reward, and it comes to those in the stenographic line who deserve it, provided a first-class system is selected and the proper means for improvement taken. In these days the facilities for perfecting oneself in the line of shorthand and typewriting are far better than those of a few years ago, and not the least advantage of the present hour in America and Europe, is the existence of an excellent line of periodicals devoted to giving information on every phase of the subject. By all means let the writer, whether a dabbler or an expert, arm himself with these tools of trade, and feel particularly grateful to those who have so perfected the art of shorthand engraving. The reproduction of the actual reporting notes of different stenographers is a most commendable enterprise on the part of

our representative shorthand journals. By all means let every writer take the journal devoted to his own system, and, if possible, some paper covering the world-wide interests of the great **SHORTHAND FRATERNITY**.

CHAPTER V.

TYPEWRITERS AND TYPEWRITING.

Mechanism.

The typewriting machine of to-day is a product of the American inventive talent of the present generation. The first two-handed typewriter was not really on sale until the summer of 1874, and though the machines exhibited at the Centennial in 1876 embodied some of the mechanism of present machines, yet the machine of 1891 is but of yesterday and would not recognize its competitor of a few years ago. The decade just closed may be said to have developed the present machine, an apparatus that it hardly seemed possible to produce before it really proved successful.

A curious fact in connection with the early history of typewriters is, that the machine first to meet with favor was one designed for printers, which was fitting, as typewriting is really a cheap method of printing when a limited number of copies are required, or one copy only. It is more than likely that before the end of the present century the type-setting machines will largely supersede hand work.

The early history of great inventions is often shrouded in mystery, but not so with the typewriter, for if we except the efforts of Henry Mill, of England, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the history of the machine does not really antedate the year 1843, when Chas. Thurbur, of Worcester, Mass., took out a patent. A. E. Beach, secured his patent in 1856, and this invention was most important because it embodied the "basket" idea of arranging the levers carrying the letters so that each letter would strike a common center, a feature which is largely utilized at the present time. Following Beach was Dr. S. W. Francis, of New York, who made a complete typewriter which included the essential features of later machines, but was too bulky for general use.

Thomas Hall took out his patent in 1867, after nearly ten years of experimenting, and this one-handed machine of ingenious construction is on the market to-day in a perfected form.

Without going into full particulars of the various efforts made to perfect machines which would do the difficult work required of them, we may mention the names of C. L. Sholes, S. W. Soule, and C. Glidden, who were instrumental in bringing out the Sholes & Glidden typewriter, E. Remington & Sons, Ilion, New York, taking the contract to manufacture the same. By 1877 three thousand were sold, and from that time on the success of the typewriter was assured. After various fluctuations of

fortune the enterprise of manufacturing and perfecting what has now become known as the "Remington" machine was, in August, 1882, taken hold of by Wyckoff, Seamans & Benedict, since which time some 60,000 of these machines have been sold.

Caligraph patents were secured in 1879, Mr. G. W. N. Yost being a principal inventor. This machine differed mainly from the Remington in having no shift-key, and in being provided with a carriage motion of new design. The machine is now handled by the American Writing Machine Company, and has had a very extensive sale.

The Hammond typewriter was patented in February, 1880, and has won a number of medals, notably the Elliott Cresson Medal, awarded by the Franklin Institute, Oct. 1st, 1890. New designs have recently been placed on the market and its manufacture is being pushed with vigor. The cut shows a new design machine.

The rivalry between the manufacturers of the various machines has been of untold benefit to the public, and has resulted in bringing into the field machines of marvellous mechanical excellence. It has been demonstrated that there is room for every good typewriter of original design and reasonable cost. As to which is the best machine on the market, all things considered, neither the manufacturers nor the public are agreed, but as has been truly said, "Every style of typewriter will give some kind of satisfaction to somebody."

All well equipped shorthand schools now have on hand for the use of their pupils the Caligraph, Remington and Hammond machines, and doubtless the new claimants for public favor will meet with a good reception, and be similarly used, when their merits become known, as the American public has always looked with an unprejudiced eye on anything in the line of improvement. Of the machines named, as well as of the Smith-Premier, Yost, Crandall, National, International, Typograph, Morris, Victor, World, Sun and Hall, we will have to let the illustrations speak, and believe that for the first time the public has had an opportunity of comparing the illustrations of these different machines side by side. The cuts are self-explanatory and are sure to be prized by those interested in this subject. We would like to refer to some of the excellent features of the less known machines, but leave that to the agents who can do it more ably.

Of the machines not shown in the cuts we may name the Odell, Automatic, Merritt, Herrington, Brooks, Hansen, Bar-lock, Blickensderfer, Barron, McLaughlin, Centotype, Donnelly, Sanders, Columbia, Densmore, Century, Crown, Ingersoll, House, Kruse, Zion, Jamison, Peoples, Queen, Prouty, Eureka, New Rapid, Munson and Westphalia. Truly these are the days of healthful competition and systematic invention.

There are two distinct classes of typewriters, viz., one-handed and two-handed machines, the latter

being the highest priced and most efficient, the former filling a place peculiarly their own. To those so situated as to be unable to examine and compare the different designs of machines, no better plan could be adopted than to write to the various manufacturers, whose addresses are given at the end of this book. Samples of work, detail views of the machines and full information will doubtless be furnished to intending purchasers.

Operation.

Shorthand and typewriting go hand in hand, that is to say, a fair degree of skill on the machine is considered a necessary acquirement for a stenographer. The machine itself is a typewriter ; the operator, whether a lady or gentleman, may be called a typewritist.

The first thing to do in learning to operate one of the standard two-handed machines, is to master the keyboard. Up to the present time too little effort has been directed towards the systematic drilling of beginners, and in most cases there has been no system of instruction, the method of operation being haphazard. There has been much experimenting, however, and of late a change for the better has come about, and some instruction in the art of manipulation can be had from manuals specially prepared for the learner, in addition to the excellent printed matter furnished with each machine. We have no doubt whatever but very soon the unscien-

tific manner of picking up the art will give place to precise system.

The student should learn where the letters are placed on the board, so that, if writing in the dark, no mistake in locating the proper keys would be made. This will be found to be a somewhat tedious process, as the learner will be likely to wish to start out for "speed," just as a young person taking music lessons wants to play tunes ; but on sticking to the drill of finding the characters by touch (be it ever so slowly), he will lay the foundation for becoming a rapid and correct operator. Of course he will not have anything like the amount of difficulty that a blind person would have to master the combinations of the letters, as in case of doubt he can refer to the keyboard, or examine the matter printed. In case the learner is fortunate enough to possess a machine of his own, and can devote plenty of time to practice, there should be no trouble in learning by touch, and though patience is required, yet it is the part of wisdom to begin in the way we have indicated, as if the student first learns to manipulate the machine by "sight," it will be found most difficult to break off the habit and acquire the better method.

It may be here remarked that the great majority of the typewritists in the country do not write by touch, so that they could not write one correct sentence in a month if blindfolded, and it will be found that some of these old operators who have stumbled

into their knowledge of the method of using these magical hand-printing machines, will decry any advice to be systematic and thorough in attempts to learn. Let incipient typewritists beware of falling into the rut of their predecessors.

Is it necessary for players to label the piano keys before they can correctly play a piece of music? No more should it be necessary to refer to the label under glass of a typewriter key before knowing where to strike. Of course it is true that the ear guides the player of a musical instrument when he goes wrong, but the point we make is that the professional musician does not go wrong, but knows the proper distance to extend his fingers to find the desired keys. In addition to striking the organ or piano keys, the musician has to read his music and keep correct time, thus making the work much more complex than that of the typewritist (as until some considerable facility in reading manuscript is attained, a copyist can hardly be expected to read his notes and operate the machine at the same time, though if he takes up the touch method he may do so to some extent in time) besides at times requiring much greater rapidity of finger movement. The professional musician can hardly tell how it is that he can strike the right key at the right time, and only knows that it is easier for him (especially for his nerves) to play a familiar piece correctly than incorrectly, because he has an intuitive habit of finding the right key. Powerful arguments in

favor of the "eyes shut" method are, that some of the fastest machine operators in the world both advocate and practice that system, and that blind people have become skillful and accurate writers.

Unfortunately the "writing by touch" method has as yet few exponents, and learners can expect no encouragement in this direction from the majority of experienced reporters, as innovations, even if improvements, usually make slow headway against the barriers of custom, laziness and prejudice. It not infrequently happens, too, as the author has found in teaching typewriting in the public schools, that some people are too full of their own wisdom to be taught anything, being of the class that "know it all" before they begin, and, of course, such pupils are among those who fall into the rut of old ways, and bad ways, too.

Mention must, however, be made of one author who has bent all the energies of his ardent mind to the task of fully expounding and advocating the "Touch" and "All-finger" methods. We refer to Mr. Bates Torrey, whose book, "Practical Typewriting," has done so much to call attention to the subject. To all who read "Shorthand and Typewriting," we cheerfully recommend as a companion volume the work of Mr. Torrey, and whether in all points the practitioner can agree with the author or not, it cannot fail to furnish food for reflection and hints worthy of adoption. The remarkable success of Practical Typewriting, as a book, shows how

rapidly the public mind is becoming awake to the higher possibilities of typewriting, and the time seems fast approaching when there shall be a universal keyboard, and a uniform system of acquiring skill on writing machines. Learning to write by looking at the keys but very little is desirable, particularly for those who have no bad habit of action already acquired, and, as Mr. Torrey points out, this is "more easily accomplished if the all-finger method be practiced."

As will be seen, we advocate the use of three fingers of each hand, and the fourth finger if possible, but all should respect the statement of Mr. F. E. McGurrin, a gentleman who when blindfolded, has written 125 words a minute correctly on the typewriter, who says: "The fingering is a most important requisite for learning to operate without looking at the keyboard. All the fingers should be used, thus practically covering the entire keyboard; one finger thus locates the position of the next key, which would not be possible if the hand had to be raised and carried over a number of keys. One finger of each hand should be left to rest always on some one key, and from this the other fingers will readily find any key desired. The same word should always be fingered in exactly the same manner, and thus the fingers will soon find the keys almost mechanically."

We are confident that if some typewriter manufacturer were to put a machine on the market with-

out lettered keys, and accompanied only by a key-chart, that in a few months a better grade of operators would succeed. It is reasonable to conclude that if an operator has his eyes free to look at his notes, and does not need to constantly glare at his fingers to see that they do not stray to the wrong letters, that he can with greater ease and satisfaction do his work. When typewriting machines were first placed on the market the manufacturers were unaware of the possibilities of the machines in the way of speed, nor could they foresee the immense demand that would in time spring up for the machines ; but now that the instrument is no longer on trial, now that it is a decided and magnificent success and fills a century felt want, an unlabeled-key machine should be placed on the market. Stenographers have long enough acted like apprentice compositors who label the type case, and should now emerge as fast as possible from the darkness of the old days.

In most schools not only is there insufficient time allowed for machine practice, but the student is apt to be hurried along—or hurries himself—so that he sacrifices real progress for temporary speed. From a very careful consideration of the matter the author is convinced that the only meritorious method of learning, is to write by touch. “A word to the wise is sufficient.” Let the student shut his eyes and learn to run the machine in this way. This may require the exercise of will-power, but perseverance

will in due time conquer, and the student will be one of the minority operators who have acquired the valuable touch method.

Remember that the first week you are trying the machine is the time to carefully adopt correct methods of operation, as a bad habit once learned sticks like Burgundy pitch. Of course it is true that rapid and correct operators are found who have paid no attention to good methods of fingering, and who are ignorant of the mechanical features of the instrument which does them such good service; but it is also true that with improved methods these writers could do more and better work, with less fatigue and expenditure of brain-power, and would not in case of accident to their machines be utterly at sea as to how they should be repaired.

There is one point in favor of the clumsy writer who lets his machine become clogged with dirt, and allows the bearings to wear for want of attention, as by so doing the manufacturer gains by having the machine wear out before its time. It is doubtful, however, if any manufacturer could be found who would encourage this sort of thing, as a badly worked machine is a poor advertisement either for the operator or for the machine he abuses.

Having decided to write by touch, and having gotten the keyboard into his head, the student can now pay attention to fingering, and should use the three-finger method. Some advocate the all-finger method, but the little finger is with most persons, in this

work, more ornamental than useful. The fourth finger may with advantage be used to a limited extent, but the amount of work to be imposed upon it may be left to the individual.

In the matter of fingering, the student is not left in the dark, as almost all typewriter manufacturers furnish charts of words with numbered letters, the numbers indicating the finger to be used, and also whether the right or left hand is to be employed. The student should go through the series of fingering cards provided, being careful to drill thoroughly on the most familiar syllabic combinations, such as "ing," "tion," "com," and "ness." A smart tap, fair on the face of the key, should be given, rather than a hard pressure. Strike the key with a swift, staccato movement, and as quickly let it go, being careful to make each finger do its share of work, as in piano practice.

That there are some good operators of two-handed machines who use only their first fingers, and write mainly by sight, does not do away with the fact that these same people would be better writers if they wrote by touch as well as by sight, and used all their working fingers.

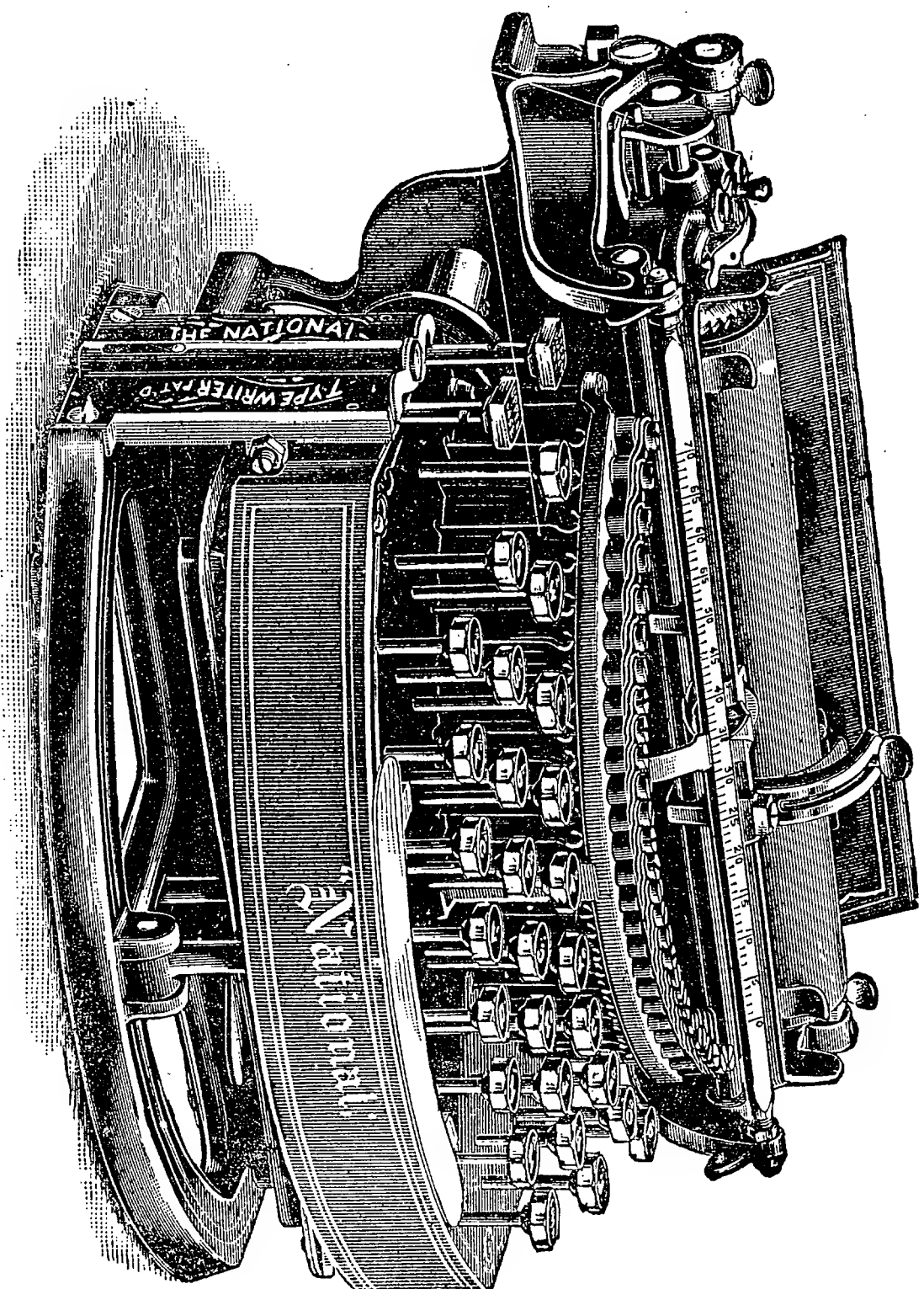
If a stand is not furnished with a machine, the beginner may be puzzled as to the proper height to place the typewriter. It should be placed at about the height it would be if set on the operator's lap, so that the arms and hands do not have to be held up when at work, which is not only fatiguing to the

writer, but will be likely to produce poor work on account of faulty striking of the keys. From the first, the right-hand half of the keyboard should be manipulated by the right-hand, the left hand doing duty on the other side. The few exceptions to this rule are unimportant.

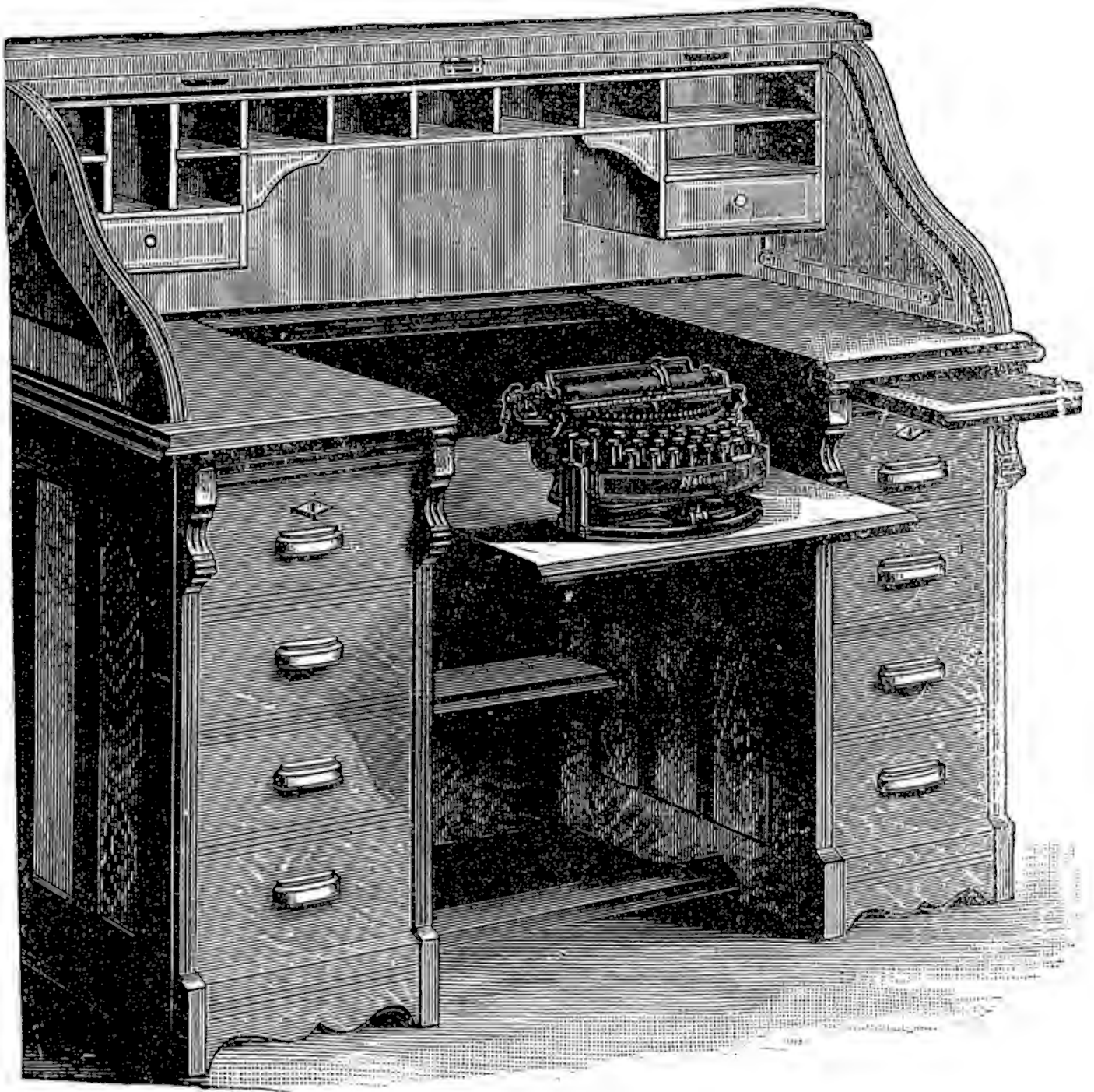
Now let the beginner resolve to know his machine thoroughly, as this is the keynote to success and the way to be kind to the machine. Study the mechanism of the machine and its principle of operation, and make yourself familiar with its general construction, but do not loosen screws or change the adjustment. Read the instructions furnished with the machine, and if it is a new one, do not "tinker" with it, or deluge with oil parts that should never be oiled at all. Trust the manufacturer, be good to your machine, and soon as your swift fingers coax the business music out of it, the inanimate marvel will seem almost human in its response to your endeavors.

Apparently it is a simple matter to write with one of these machines, and it is, in fact, an easy thing to acquire a speed equal to ordinary longhand writing, but the student should remember that if the proper methods are employed a speed two or three times that of the fastest writer of longhand can be attained. Is not such a result worth striving for?

The first attempt to learn typewriting is always encouraging to the tyro—amusingly so. "Why, it is as simple as day," says the learner, "and all one



THE NATIONAL TYPEWRITER.



ROLL-TOP DESK WITH TYPEWRITER.

has to do is to put in the paper, adjust the carriage, and then bang away at the letters." Sure enough that is the main part of the operation, and yet when the learner finds himself able to even copy a page, at fair speed without making an error of any kind, he will "point with pride" to his achievement, and justly too. For, be it known, that in the matter of typewriting there is a world of difference between turning out copy partly right, and turning it out just right. Each page should be written so as to show the even and uniform touch which is the distinguishing characteristic of perfect typewriting; the capitals should all be there, the punctuation correct, the spelling perfect, the spacing exact; and quite as important as anything else the general form and make-up of the matter should be according to good usage. That there is a right way and that there is a wrong way, is emphatically true in machine writing, and though perfection is only attained by attention to trifles, yet the overlooking of these trifles is the cause of so much slipshod and deplorable typewriting being done. No wonder printers despise the machine that makes (in the hands of these careless ones) such poor work that, typographically, it is a failure. Let the operator at the outset resolve to do justice to himself and bring out the best there is in the particular machine he uses.

Any young man or woman who contemplates taking up the study of shorthand should seize the first opportunity to learn typewriting; the latter has to

be learned anyway, and the earlier the better. A young lady recently took up the study of shorthand, but owing to the difficulty of the system and the fact of her being too busy much of the time to pursue the course, she was wisely advised to first of all take up machine writing, as while it would be less wearisome to learn, the knowledge would be worth having even if shorthand had to be abandoned.

There are many hundreds of young women employed at good salaries in Commercial Agencies, Insurance Houses, etc., who know nothing of shorthand, but have learned to operate the typewriter swiftly and well. Should any of these young ladies decide to take up shorthand, they would on learning it be likely to give their employers the best of satisfaction, as a good typewritist can sometimes atone for stenographic inability by taking dictations direct to the machine, until greater facility in making and reading pencil notes is acquired.

“On the first introduction of the typewriter,” says the *Scientific American*, “it was suggested that its use would result in throwing out of employment numbers of persons who had formerly been employed in various clerical capacities; but probably it has just had the opposite effect. The more convenient that it is for professional men, managers of affairs, or chiefs in any line of business, to have done quickly and in good shape such work as comes within the scope of the typewriter, the more of such work there is found to do. Not only is correspondence made

plainer and much more complete in detail, but a great deal of work that it was formerly considered necessary to have printed, is now done quite as satisfactorily on the typewriter."

Learning to operate the typewriter is worthy of more attention than it now receives in many schools, and we would advise intending students to keep shy of schools where typewriting is a sort of by-play, and where only "veteran" machines are kept for the use of pupils. Typewriting is really an art and should never be acquired on a rickety machine, as that is apt to induce a fitful, pounding method of operation. Beginners are apt to either strike too hard or too lightly, and the proper touch can only be learned on a good machine. The typewriter is like a musical instrument and is to be coaxed rather than driven.

While it is true that the possibilities of speed on the machine give it a leverage over longhand writing, yet the fact that with this swiftness there comes a legibility that cannot be claimed for the writing of even a professor of penmanship, makes the typewriter everywhere victorious when it comes in competition with the pen, for readableness is a prime consideration in regard to either the press printed or machine printed page—the longhand or the shorthand manuscript. To-day a business man can, if his time is valuable, for a nominal sum, hire a stenographer to look after his correspondence. Besides saving time the employer soon gets into a methodical

habit of attending to his mail, and presently finds that his indexed books of clearly printed correspondence are a vast advance on the old-time illegible scrawls of himself or of his pet book-keeper.

The business man after a while learns to dictate well, and to do that he must think clearly, with the inevitable result on the one hand of making his correspondence terse and pointed when details are not called for, but lengthy and complete when a full explanation of circumstances, or description in particular are demanded. Then who can estimate the advantage a business man enjoys of hearing himself dictate? While it is being dictated the matter is passing through a double checking process, and after the matter dictated has been written out it again goes through a double checking process, being first read by the stenographer, and, if important, by the dictator. The chances of mistakes occurring are thus reduced to a minimum, the sender and receiver alike reaping the benefit.

Figures play an important part in commercial transactions, and for making legible figures the machine is peculiarly adapted, and for the great advantage of clearly tabulated correspondence and hand-printed data we may thank those great benefactors of mankind, the inventors of the typewriting machine, and the makers thereof.

Outside of dictated correspondence, what an important factor the typewriter has become in the line of copying. It is well known that longhand is at a

literary discount, and no author of any pretensions (or brains) any longer thinks of sending other than typewritten "copy" to a publisher, and no more fervent thanksgiving has ever been uttered than the exclamations of compositors when they have discovered that the great man and famous author, who used formerly to torture them with his undecipherable "hand," has turned over a new leaf and bought a typewriter (or hired a copyist) as evidenced by the neat and beautiful copy that now comes from his hands. In addition to its being a pleasure to compositors to receive carefully typed copy, there is also a great advantage to the author in his being able to see his own productions "in print" before sending to the office of publication. Anyone who has ever sent an article to the press for publication can appreciate the different appearance it makes when printed from what it did as written matter. This feature in itself has proven to be a boon untold to authors, whether famous or obscure.

Young authors may feel assured that machine written matter is likely, if there is any merit whatever in the composition, to receive a careful scanning, and should know that MS. so prepared is almost an essential pre-requisite to a favorable reception on the part of a book publisher or magazine editor, no matter how meritorious the article, or finished the style. The steel pen has gotten into disfavor with many of the leading journalists, lecturers and authors of the day.

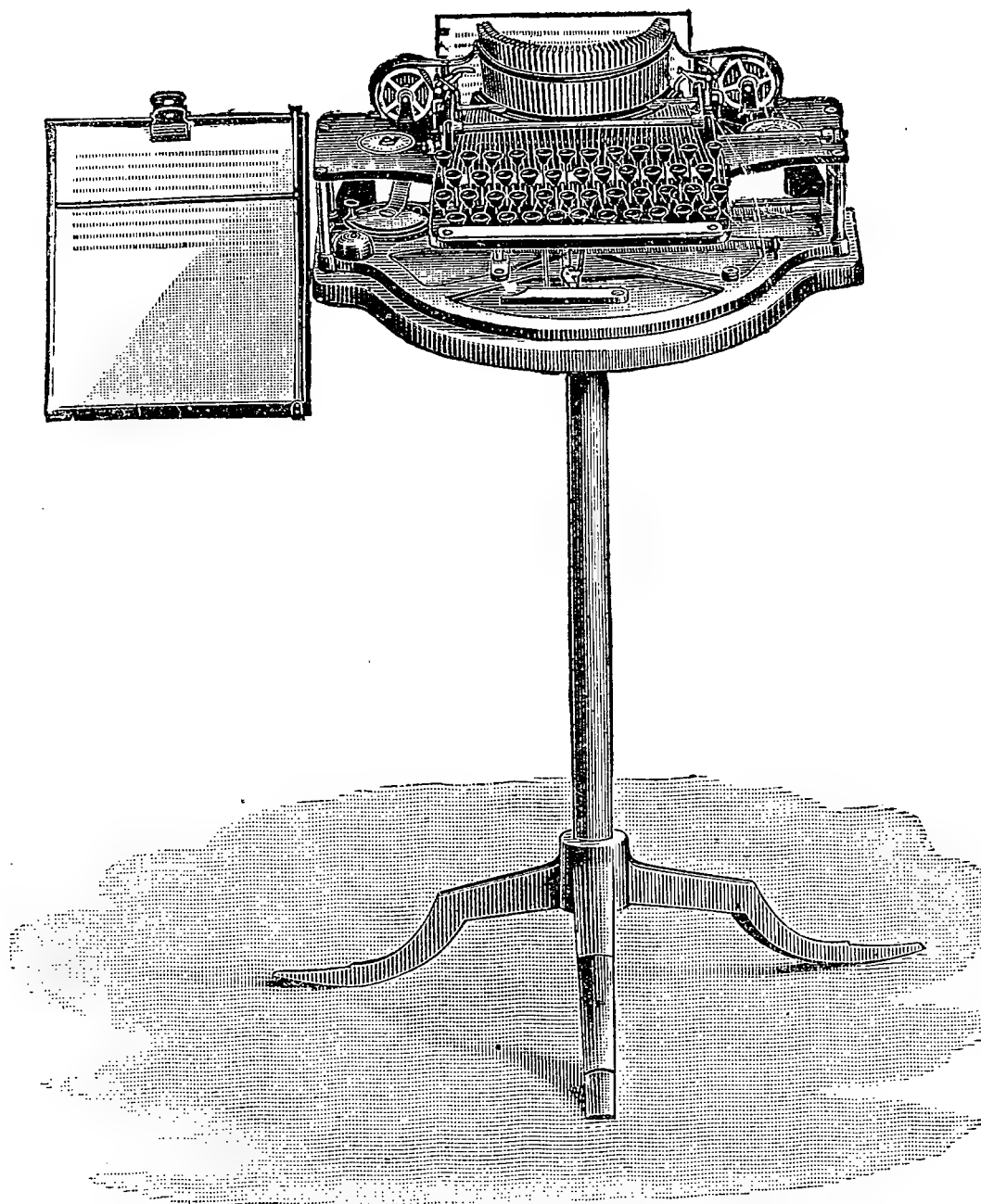
Typewritten slips have also found their way to the desk of the orator, and what a multitude of mistakes does the essayist avoid by using legible manuscript, and how much more cogent the facts seem to fall from the speaker's lips when his eyes assure him that his words are being delivered exactly as he had them hand-printed in advance.

Swift in execution, compact in make up, durable in the letter book, readable everywhere, what more can be said in favor of the typewriting machine and the printed letter ?

Years ago, some genius, whose knowledge of human nature was abnormal, invented type in imitation of the typewriter, for printers' use. The cold-blooded and ubiquitous "circular" had become a nuisance that promptly found its way to the waste basket, and hektograph copies of handwriting had already been placed on the black list, when some bright mind conceived the idea of imitating the work of the typewriter. Of course it took well for a time, and with the cool falsehood, "Dictated" on the corner of the sheet, millions of these missives were sent out, the recipients thinking that they were being favored with a personal letter warm from the heart of the signer. This ruse, though by no means shallow, as the imitation was good, no longer deceives anybody except that interesting class of citizens who are yet waiting for news of the Civil War, and wondering if General Grant will win.



OPERATING THE "YOST" MACHINE.



THE TYPOGRAPH.

But there is one objection to the writing of correspondence on a machine and it would be unfair not to mention it. Young ladies still insist that all love correspondence, especially all proposals of marriage, shall be written, not with a "horrid" typewriter, but with pen and ink. Society says that in the department of *belles-lettres* the successor of the quill shall still reign, but even in this direction society might have some pardonable agitation when it remembers the fate of the quill.

Almost every week patents are taken out on new designs of machines, and, not to be outdone in absurdity, one Western man advertises a typewriter which sells for seventy five cents. He might have added, "The babies all cry for it." There is, however, a tremendous demand to-day for a medium priced two-hand machine, that will work and wear well, and a fortune possibly awaits the inventor of such a machine.

The typewriter is here to stay, and soon will be introduced into the public schools all over the land, as they already have been in some places, and thus their usefulness will become general.

We think the machine will be more used as a luxury in the future than it has been in the past. What more fascinating employment—or recreation, if you will—can be imagined for rich people than writing on one of the beautiful new instruments furnished by the present manufacturers? Perhaps the reason that more people of leisure who sigh for

alluring employment do not take hold of these machines, is because of the popular idea that ability to use them can only be attained by clever, poor people. We hope soon there will be thousands more of the beautiful writing instruments which are illustrated in these pages finding their way into the palaces of the rich. The wealthy classes should not allow these mechanical luxuries to be employed only in the line of business, but should take them into their homes, where they would be ornamental and useful, and delightful educators. In what better possible way can spelling, punctuation and composition be taught than by the use of the machine? Every rich man and every man of moderate means, who is induced to place one of these instruments in the hands of his children, will in due time exclaim, "I have made a sensible investment."

CHAPTER VI.

GENERAL HINTS.

Be your own counsellor.

Write a variety of matter.

Re-inked ribbons are unsatisfactory.

Keep the machine you use bright and clean.

Use a typewriter rubber eraser instead of a knife.

Resolve to practice each day—if only ten minutes.

Some good stenographers use the left hand in writing.

Invest in shorthand books engraved in advanced style, and read them in spare moments.

Remember there is no more beautiful art than shorthand writing. So be in love with your profession.

Do not call the reader back when he is getting beyond your speed: if possible hustle along and even up.

To make a semi-colon when there is none on machine, hold down spacer while striking both comma and colon.

There is no royal road to speed in shorthand, and the only thing to do is to plod, conscientiously following out good principles.

When you do get a job do not write foolish things to the periodicals and minimize the difficulties to be encountered in rising in the profession.

A knowledge of book-keeping is worth possessing. Many men and women earn large salaries by combining book-keeping with their stenographic work.

Often stenographers seeking positions are asked to send a sample of their longhand. The obvious lesson to be drawn from that is to practice penmanship assiduously.

Write your personal memoranda in shorthand. It will be practice in shorthand, will not be readable to the general public in case you lose the book, and will economize space.

Shorthand will probably, ere long, be taught in the public schools, but that does not do away with the fact that there is an ample field to-day for specialists in this line.

If opportunity offers make yourself familiar with other writing machines than the one which you use. Even a slow working knowledge of different typewriters may prove advantageous.

Do not be squeamish in the matter of being "timed." Adopt the plan of being timed systematically, not being elated by an occasionally high speed-record, or disheartened by a low record.

Beware of the youth who is looking for an easy system and an easy place. Henry Ward Beecher once told one of these callow young men that the only real easy place he knew of was the grave.

Write with a view to reading. Do not write many pages of an address, and then after reading the opening sentences say, "I guess I can read it all right," and then throw the manuscript away.

If you have a good idea, born of practical experience, do not keep it for yourself alone, but send it to one of the bright journals that are helping to throw light on the subject. Pass your ideas around.

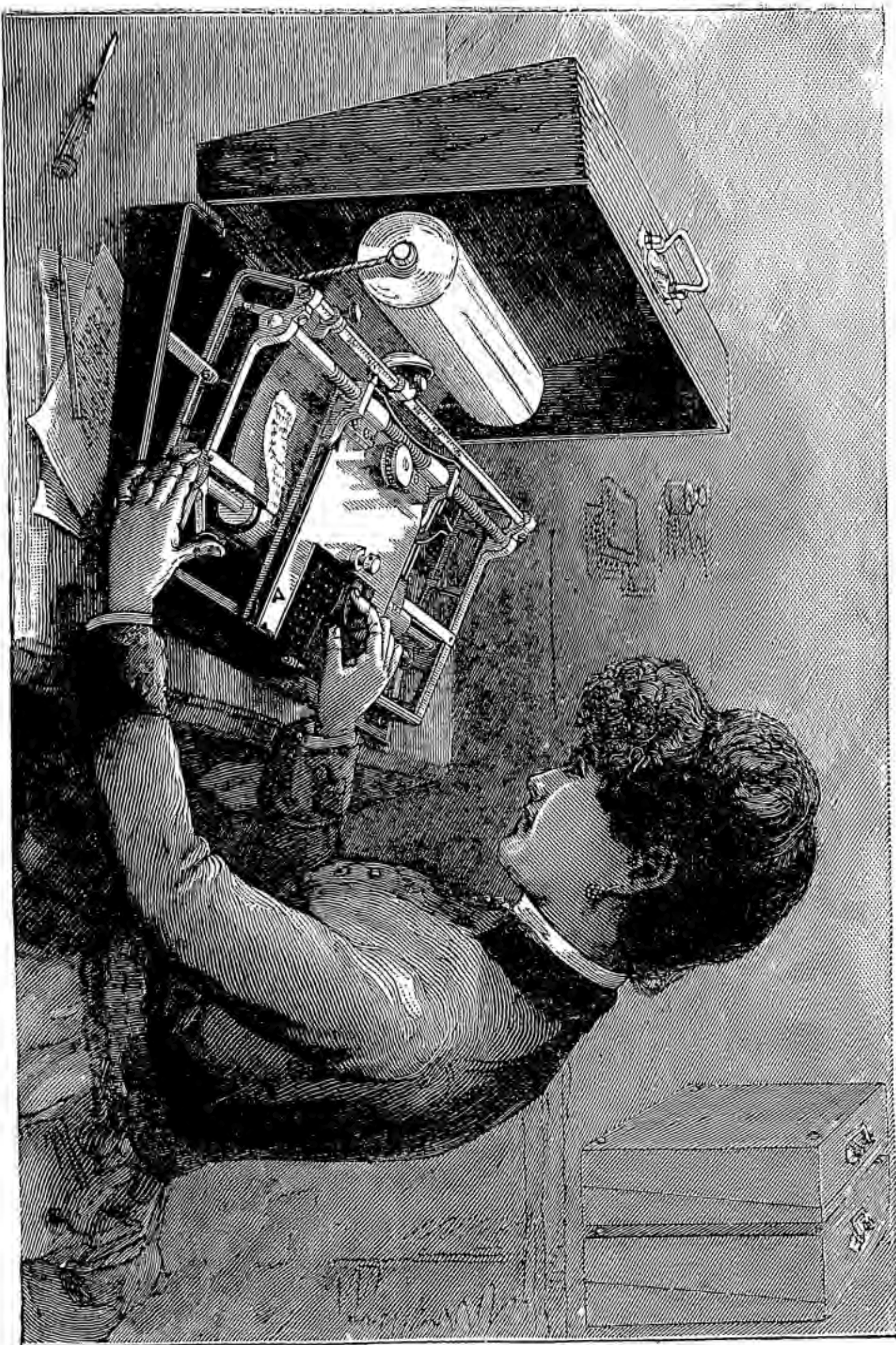
Do not jump to the conclusion that you must phrase everything you can, as if you do so the chances are that you will blunder so often that you will go to the other extreme and will not phrase as much as you should.

The standard demanded in shorthand work will doubtless rise higher and higher. This will down all inferior systems, and discourage incapable writers. Phonography is no longer on trial, and it may be set down as a fact, that there is now and always will be plenty of room at the top.

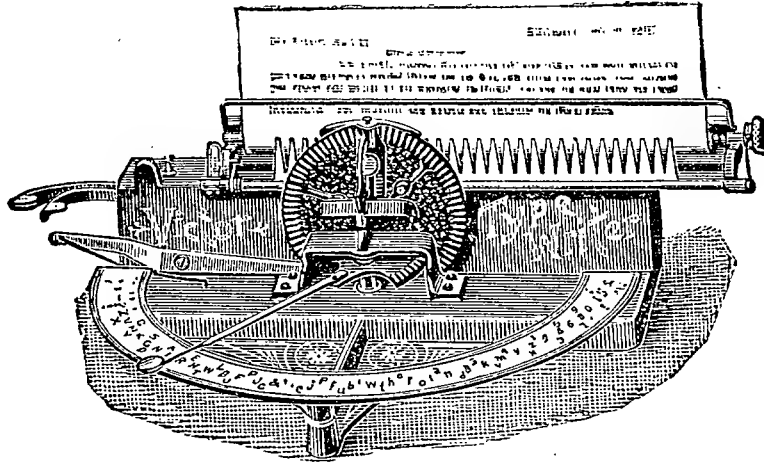
An excellent plan is for an advanced student to have some one read slowly to him while he inserts all the vowels as he writes the consonants. Of course some contracted outlines cannot be fully vocalized, but the ability to instantly insert the vowels will be found a valuable accomplishment.

Some of the novelties and little devices for assisting the stenographer which have recently been placed on the market will be found quite useful. An adjustable copy-holder is a good thing, particularly for a near-sighted person. The stenographer will find even pens and pencils specially manufactured to meet his requirements.

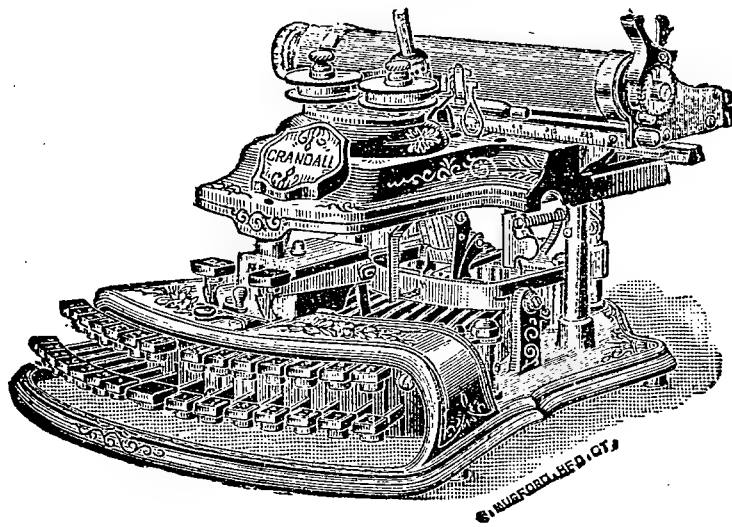
Be careful to shift the ribbon of the typewriter so that it does not wear only on one part. When a



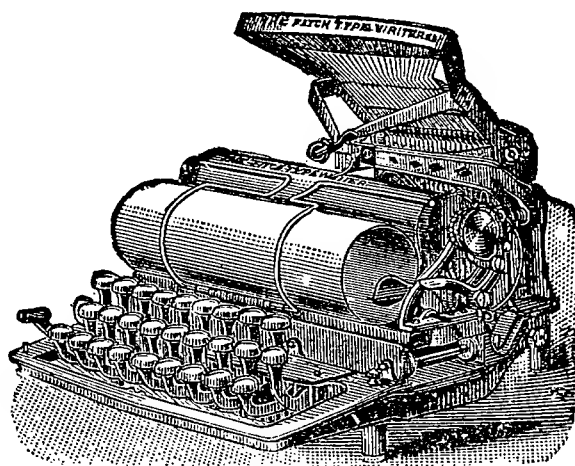
OPERATING THE HALL TYPEWRITER.



THE VICTOR TYPEWRITER.



THE CRANDALL TYPEWRITER.



THE FITCH TYPEWRITER.

ribbon is used up on one side it will be found helpful, in case a new one is not readily procurable, to turn the ribbon, so that a different side will be touched by the type. Putting an old ribbon aside in a damp place is said to restore it somewhat.

Correspond in shorthand with one or more of your friends. This is a more beneficial exercise than it gets credit for being, but insist that your correspondent write accurately and carefully and does not make you puzzle over his or her special contractions. Postal card correspondence in shorthand is quite common, and almost as much can be indited in this way as would be put in a regular letter.

It has been justly remarked that stenographers as a rule are of a literary turn of mind. This is accounted for from the fact that to make a success of stenography it is necessary to have a fair knowledge of composition and understand the power of words. It is in fact only those who are at least moderately inclined in a literary way who are attracted to shorthand writing as a means of subsistence.

Be prompt at your work and, if it is practicable, prompt to leave it. You will thus get into the habit of trying hard to make each day's work self-inclusive. Sometimes, of course, there will be work ahead, but make due effort to get your letters off the day they are dictated. Take the telegrams and

important letters first, and then transcribe your notes in the order in which they have been taken.

In selecting a system and school do not be hasty, but when once you have started to study a system go right through with it, as in nine cases out of ten you will gain only loss of time by abandoning your first choice. There is a difference between the leading styles of shorthand, but more depends on the student than on anything else, and in fickle hands the best of all systems would prove of doubtful utility.

A stenographer went to California to take a position. He entered upon his duties, and in receiving his first dictation he was obliged to write holding his dictation book upon his knee. It is well to practice writing with different materials and under circumstances when you are not well supplied with accessory aids. A reporter must not be squeamish, but be ready to write good notes anyway—at least, write readable notes.

A stenographer who had in his pocket recommendations from an eminent politician, secured an enviable position with a manufacturing concern. But the young man had convivial habits, and one day went to his desk under the influence of liquor. He was, of course, at once discharged. Moral, do not drink whiskey under the impression that it will

assist you in your profession. Moral No. 2, do not drink whiskey anyway.

Make use of a shorthand dictionary. This is important if you wish to write a pure system, and the habit some pupils have of throwing overboard all helps to correctness of outline, once they are able to write new matter slowly, is not good. Of course a variation from the book is at times a healthy sign, else where would progress come in ; but the rule is that the author of a system is a better judge as to outline than his pupil.

Writers' cramp or paralysis of the hand, due to much writing, is a real affliction that has been experienced by not a few book-keepers and others. The muscular-movement is a good preventative of the trouble, and, of course, the use of the typewriting machine has been a decided check to the malady. Stenographers can sometimes rest the fingers when taking notes by placing the pencil between different fingers than those generally used.

Trepidation on the part of a writer is natural while taking the first dictation when called to do practical work. If you are competent, this nervousness will gradually wear off, as few employers are exacting while the stenographer is new. Ordinarily a fair chance is afforded. Keeping cool is a great aid to good work, and is a state of mind that

the most nervous can bring about by a good exercise of will-power and common sense.

It has been stated that an excellent way to gain speed without a reader is to copy over an engraved article one hundred times. After it has been copied forty or fifty times the piece will have been committed to memory, and one can really dictate to himself. Another way is to copy each sentence of the article one hundred times separately. In this way, the outlines are, as it were, burned into the brain. This is work, but work wins.

Practice upon matter relating to the business of those in whose employ you expect to be. Should you secure a situation and have a few days on hand before you take your place, write over and over every scrap of literature relating to your employer's calling. Write from circulars, advertisements, pamphlets, books or anything in the line of the subject matter of your future work. This hint may be worth more to you than the price of this book.

It is customary on all kinds of machines to make use of copyable ribbons, and the indelible copying are the best, i. e., ribbons prepared with ink that does not change with time or exposure to the air. Ordinary tissue-paper copying books are used in connection with typewriters, and the book, when

filled, if the correspondence and data have been carefully copied, presents a marked contrast in beauty and legibility to the old time hand-written pages.

Once fairly upon the way, do not depend too much upon the advice of others, as there is no experience exactly reproduced a second time. Lay broad and deep the general principles of phonography according to printed instructions, but rear upon this basis a superstructure of originality in small details, and be not turned to the right or left by the counsel of parties who know next to nothing about shorthand, though oftentimes these people are the ones most prone to offer their advice.

A young reporter should be modest, but not timid in his first efforts to report in public. He should not flourish his note-book, or make undue noise or fuss, but should endeavor to secure a good location, with a firm backing to his book, (having a good supply of sharpened pencils on hand) and then make a determined effort to get every word. Do not be discouraged if you fail to hear or record an occasional word, as you may be doing much better than you are aware of at the time of writing.

Speed classes, such as are found in most large cities, are excellent as a means of developing ability in young writers. If you cannot form an associa-

tion of stenographers in your city, then ally yourself to some kindred spirit and share your practice study with him. How profitable and pleasant the hours spent in this way—literally “comparing notes.” With a dictionary, half a dozen lead pencils, plenty of blank paper, and a book to read from, two young writers can thus educate themselves splendidly.

Amanuenses sometimes have to be irregular in their hours of labor, depending altogether upon the business, disposition or environments of the employer. Men who dictate their matter early in the day and do not allow the mail basket to overflow with unanswered letters, are the stenographer's ideal of model business men. But at times the lunch hour has to be changed and the evening party given up, and the clerk must do his best to accommodate himself to the necessities of the case—if they are necessities.

When a number of parties dictate to one stenographer it is sometimes a question in what order the letters should be transcribed, and who should have the preference. This affords a good opportunity for testing the perceptive powers of the writer. As a rule, it is better to take the letters in the order in which they come in the note-book. Dictators are seldom dictatorial and are usually reasonable in their demands. What they want is to have the

work done neatly and accurately within justifiable time limits

Few things in the writing line have given more satisfaction than the use of a good steel pen, and its days are not yet numbered some good writers would have us believe. But gold pens, specially made for shorthand writers, have been before the public for many years, and have given great satisfaction to the users thereof. The beauty of these pens is that shading can be done as with a lead pencil without turning the hand sideways to any appreciable extent. Great is Gillott, but Wirt and Waterman are greater than he.

It may be advisable to give your mind an entire rest from shorthand once in a while, if a student. The length of pause in the proceedings will depend upon circumstances. Some of the most successful students of shorthand in the schools have been diligent during the day, but have given their evenings over to relaxation. So with the private student it may be needful to take short mental naps—when effort in shorthand is thrown to the winds—only care should be taken that such lulls do not come too often or stretch out too long.

Many excellent reporters make large notes, but it is conceded on all sides that there is an advantage in making the notes quite small. To get into the

habit of making small notes it is better for a student to write with a pen (nothing is better than a good steel pen, and Spencerian No. 1 will suit most people) and on closely ruled paper. Be careful in buying practice paper to see that the lines are distinct. There is no need in spreading out the strokes so that two lines are used when only one is required, and if a writer is careful from the start he can make his notes small and legible too.

After practicing shorthand it is invariably the case that the principles of the art are somewhat forgotten, and as a means of at once replenishing your purse and grounding yourself by way of review of the elements, it is a good plan to undertake to teach one or more pupils. Many people wish to look into the "mystic art," and by taking a hand in the instruction of others you will yourself improve, particularly in the reading of engraved notes, if you are deficient in that direction, and you will be surprised at the extent of new ideas that even the questions of your pupils will develop.

Keep a number of sharp pencils on your desk. You will not use any more lead by having half-a-dozen sharp pencils ready for use, than by having only one that is prone to get lost at inconvenient moments. One stenographer who took his letters from a dictator of somewhat elastic tongue stated that he could write faster with a sharp pencil, and

in his spare moments he took care to sharpen up a good supply of pencils, which he kept handy for use in a drawer of his desk. Pencils are more used in shorthand work than are pens, but a writer should early accustom himself to use either.

In choosing a school or system be deliberate, but do not waste valuable time. If you live in the country and have no friend whose knowledge in the matter would make his counsel valuable, then the best thing you can do is to send for circulars to some half-dozen teachers, using your best judgment in the matter, and it is to be sincerely hoped that your wise choice of a system will ever after gladden your heart. Remember that any one of the leading systems has earned the right to be called successful, and the road that has been traveled by so many will be perfectly safe for you to follow.

A person should not be surprised if he finds himself unable to do something which he has not been trained to do. A "short term" stenographer with stage-coach speed and nervous hand should no more expect to be able to sit down and take an important letter warm from the lips of a rapid talker, than a shoemaker could sit down in a telegraph office and receive a message. About two hours blundering attempt to do that in writing which cannot be done until one has learned to do it, will cure anyone of

asking the question, "How long does it take to learn shorthand?" The time it takes is until it is learned.

There are times when an enterprising reporter may speculate on his own account by slyly writing out an accurate report of a lecture or sermon and disposing of his report to some publisher. We have read of a man who made a specialty of taking down funeral addresses in full, and selling handsomely typewritten copies for large sums of money to wealthy relatives of the deceased. There are occasional chances for doing work of a miscellaneous character that do not take up very much time, and bring in cash returns, besides giving a young man a broader business acquaintance and a greater range of work.

Amateur reporters sometimes make the mistake, in a large hall, of getting clear up to the front, the speaker standing as it were over their heads. Such a position is a poor one for either hearing or seeing. If a seat is not secured at a table on the platform, then it is preferable to sit in the audience, distant, in a large hall, at least 15 or 20 seats from the speakers, and one row either to the right or left of the centre row of seats. On no account, in a large hall, allow yourself to be forced back on the stage: better mix with the audience near the front. In a small building, of course, the reporter's place is of small consequence.

You think you would like shorthand, do you? Just now you know nothing about it, and perhaps wonder if you could ever learn to move your hand fast enough. In order to test the matter, just have brother Tom read to you as fast as you can write well in longhand, and if you succeed in writing thirty-five words a minute you may feel encouraged, and it would probably pay you to buy an instruction book and look into the matter further. Being naturally quick of hand will prove of great advantage to you in pursuing the study, and if you lack that requisite, you can, in the way indicated, ascertain it fairly well before you undertake to go further.

A man who speaks from notes in public address is afraid to trust himself without them, and, unless he early throw away his "crutches," will find himself leaning on them more and more. So a shorthand writer, if the speaker be slow, is apt to write some parts in abbreviated longhand. This should not be done. Even the name and address, if a letter is being dictated, should be written in shorthand, but be fully vocalized. Very soon the writer will find himself in possession of a good vocabulary of proper nouns. Always write the names of states and cities in shorthand, a good plan being to practice upon long lists of them so as to be fore-armed.

Practice if you would be proficient. Practice till

the beads of sweat roll from your brow, till your hand aches, till the reader you have drafted into your service becomes hoarse, cross and weary—practice till your wife hates the sight of a notebook and your neighbors and friends declare you are a shorthand crank. Write a few lines of shorthand after you come home late at night from a visit to a distant city; peep into the engraved exercises of your favorite shorthand periodical while waiting for breakfast; review word-signs as you travel on the cars; and having done all these things, then practice and study just a little more. Then you can write, read or teach shorthand.

It will be found a good plan to keep two dictation books ready for use, as if one book is beside the machine while transcribing a letter, the other can be laid open on your desk with a sharp pencil beside it—ready for any sudden dictation that may come. Some writers have desks in such disorder that when they hear the words, “Take a letter to ——,” they scramble for their outfit, a habit annoying to both dictator and writer. A good stenographer, with material always at hand to use, need fear nothing. This hint is particularly applicable where there are many dictators, as in a railroad office or large concern of any kind, as some of these may wish to send telegrams, notes or letters hurriedly.

A good speed exercise for the hand is to write the

figure three as rapidly as possible. Be careful to make a readable figure each time. You will be surprised to find how few threes you can make the first minute, and equally surprised in finding how quickly practice increases speed. Any finger writer who competes in this exercise with a person using the muscular movement, will quickly decide to adopt the latter. The making of threes in this way is a plan which we believe was devised by a writing teacher, and a trial of this exercise will prove both amusing and profitable. The sustained precision of hand required to make a couple of hundred threes rapidly is just what is required in shorthand writing.

Take interest in your work. This advice is specially applicable to young ladies, some of whom fail to master small details that would make their services much more valuable. Some young girls become amanuenses in places where technical terms are used, and close distinctions between words made, under which circumstances it is all important that the mind of the writer be engrossed with the work in hand. Even the spelling of unfamiliar words is easily acquired by an attentive writer, but some amanuenses do not take to this line of accuracy with any spirit, and not a few lose their situations in consequence of their mental lassitude. Ability to write shorthand is sometimes only a small part

of the necessary qualifications for doing acceptable office work.

Of course one of the necessary things for a shorthand writer is to be secretive and not to sound upon the housetops trade secrets or the contents of confidential letters. It is a rare thing indeed to hear of any breach of confidence in this direction, and the honor of stenographers as a class ranks high, which is not to be accounted for solely from the fact that a betrayal of trust in this direction would likely prove professional suicide. Stenographers are usually honest, and even money considerations do not weigh with them when a question of fealty to their firm is concerned. It is scarcely possible at first to be too secretive, nor is it best to talk too much even though you should preface your disclosures by saying, "Don't say anything." Take the advice yourself.

You have been a stenographer perhaps these many years. Do you remember the difficulties you encountered in getting your abilities recognized? Well, now that you are in a good place, keep your eye open for that friend of yours. Such thoughtfulness will cost you little and may place some worthy individual under lasting obligations to you. With few exceptions stenographers are "clannish," and because they are so is one reason why they seldom need to combine formally in defensive

organizations to maintain their rights, as brotherly assistance in securing positions for worthy men and women is the best means to crowd out the straggling incapables who annoy in any profession, chiefly because they are too indolent to work, and whose presence is a menace to a high standard and good prices.

For actually filling a position it may be well for a time for you to confine yourself to a special line of writing matter, but for developing a good, all-around writer there is nothing more necessary than variety of matter. Write everything, and if your reader asks "Do you wish me to read this?" say, "Yes, go ahead, it will be practice anyway." An eminent stenographer wrote through the entire Bible, and can we doubt but such a man would be well prepared to report a sermon? Another man writes through Macaulay's History of England, and will he not be better equipped on that account for general reporting? The beauty of practice of this kind for an advanced writer is that he can improve his mind and his shorthand simultaneously, for who is there that listens more keenly to both words and logic than a stenographer?

After the ability to write at about a hundred words a minute is attained the student should, preferably, use a note-book, and no longer write on loose sheets, and the stenographer should use good

paper and file away his notes so that he can compare the notes of one year with those of another. To be true to fact it will, unfortunately, be found rare that the form of outline improves with years of practice, and the everyday writer of shorthand is apt to become careless, just as rapid longhand writers do. A stenographer's feeling that he can read his own notes, however made, is not conducive to beauty of characters in continued reporting work. As a writer once said, "I never wrote anything I could not read if I took time enough to study it out." As it is often easier to do a thing right than wrong, if good habits are formed, so it would be better for many in the business to write more carefully for fear they will have to puzzle over some part of their notes too closely and thus waste valuable time.

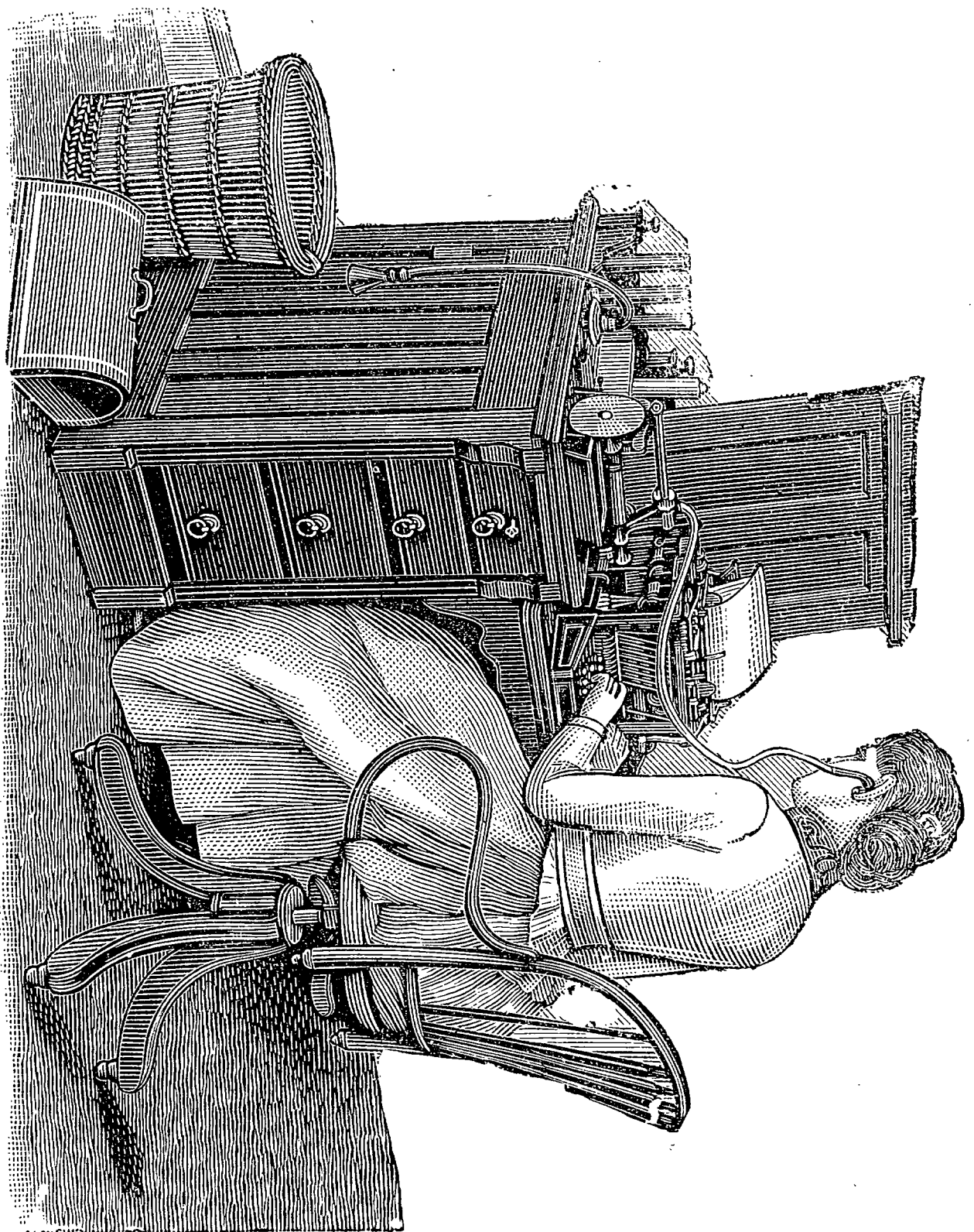
A reporter must, and an amanuenses should, keep posted in regard to current affairs. In no way can this be done so well as by reading the local and general newspapers. It may seem as if information of this kind has nothing to do with a writer's success, but in reality it is an essential thing that he should as quickly as possible acquire a good fund of data in regard to the locality in which he lives, and keep informed in regard to passing history all over the world. When least expected such knowledge may be found valuable. It is a curious fact that we hardly can become possessed of information of any

good kind whatsoever that will not at some time prove of exceeding service to us, and it is particularly true of the stenographer that he can use to advantage any equipment of brain-food with which he may have provided himself. If mankind had a greater thirst for wisdom and knowledge, and less appetite for nonsense and "killing time," there would be fewer fools, fewer paupers, and fewer ignorant stenographers, who are an infringement on the very name of stenographer.

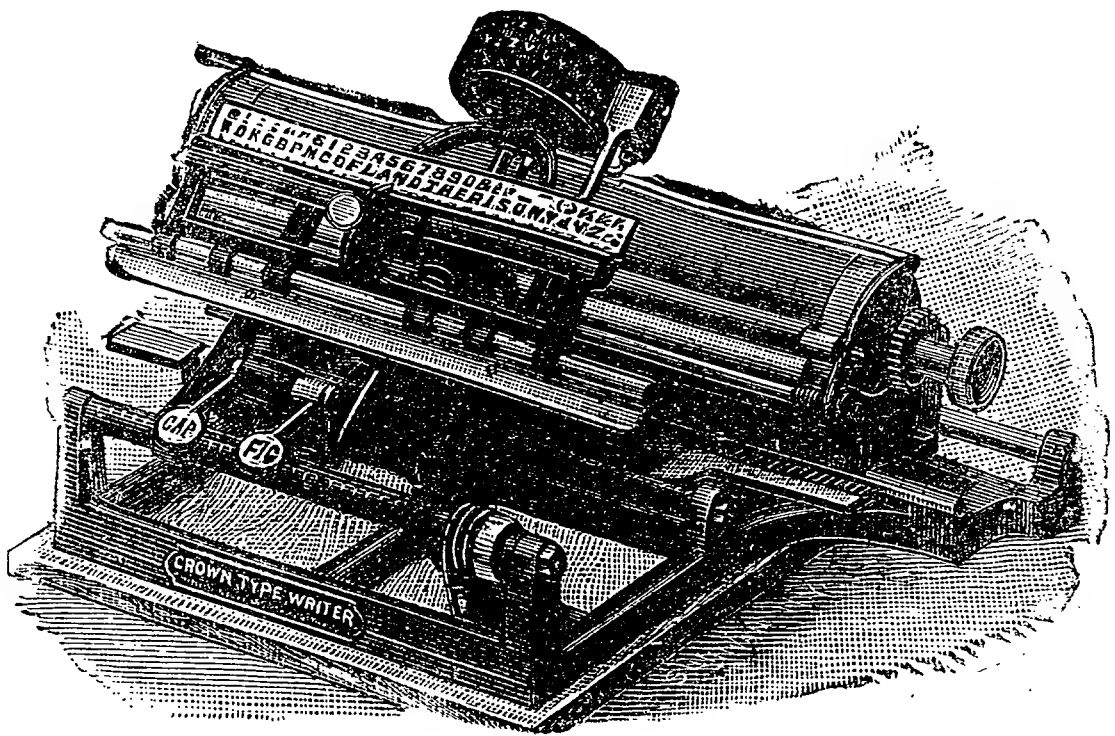
The ability to compose well while using the typewriter to record a person's thoughts is not the least advantage of the machine. One needs to be quite familiar with the use of the typewriter to make it serviceable in this way, but that the clicking of the machine to those who are entirely at home in its use is no annoyance whatever to its users is true. And any stenographer who is something of an author will find that there is no possible way in which he can criticise his own work so effectively as by undertaking to re-write what he has written. The stenographer is so used to revising and putting in readable shape all kinds of matter from all kinds of dictators, that criticisms are made more freely and with more judgment when using the machine than at any other time. Let an operator revise his own manuscript and our word for it that all redundancies which may have crept into the composition will be thrown out, and all ambigu-

ous or obscure sentences will be corrected. Business correspondence is to the point, and the shorthanders cannot write this kind of matter year in and year out without being drilled in the art of clear and oftentimes elegant expression.

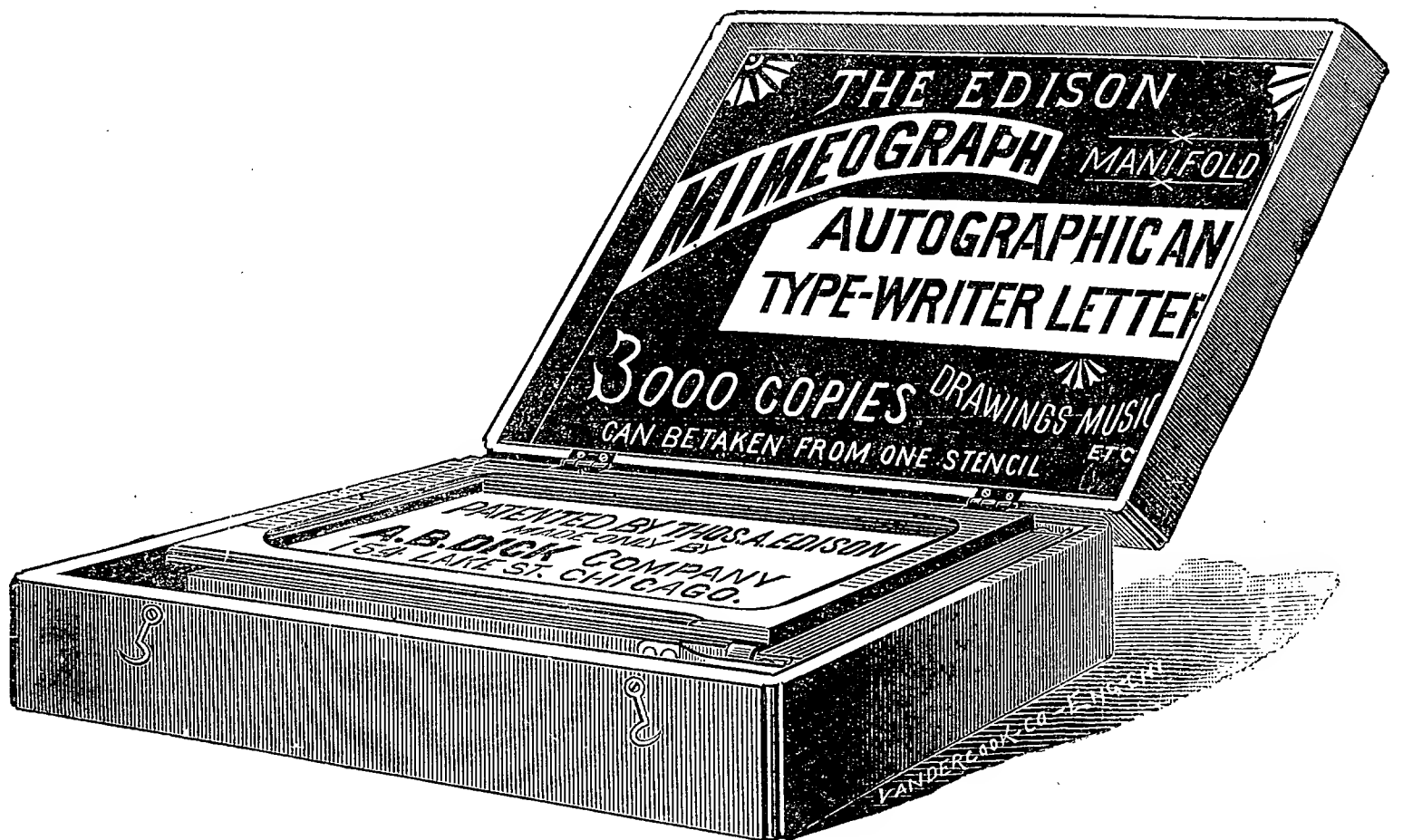
Copying engraved shorthand notes is a valuable exercise and is recommended in all text books. Take the key to an engraved lesson and write it as well as possible according to the theories in your head, and then compare your work with the engraved page, thus correcting any errors which you may have made. After that, it is well to take the engraved part as a model and copy one lesson over and over again. Then call into your service a reader, and write the matter over many times from dictation, being careful at first to have the reading proceed no faster than will allow of your making each outline well. Now practice up on this same piece for speed, and never mind if the reader gets a little ahead, do not call him back, but make your fingers fly faster. Your mind will only have to carry the words of a speaker as the outlines will have become familiarized by the careful practice first mentioned, and you will soon find that you can make good, readable notes at a surprising rate of speed. This kind of practice or something equivalent to it is the only true method of gaining speed, and the pursuing of this course through engraved Readers is what has made some of our high-salaried and world-famed writers what they



TYPEWRITING FROM PHONOGRAPH-GRAPHOPHONE DICTATION.



THE CROWN TYPEWRITER.



THE MIMEOGRAPH.

are to day. Any one unwilling to “plod” through countless exercises in this way, can never become a good writer.

The hektograph is one of the best known methods of obtaining duplicate copies of a written page. To make a hektograph, procure a tin pan of suitable size, say twelve inches long, eight inches wide and seven-eighths of an inch deep. The mixture is made by dissolving slowly five pounds of glycerine to seven packages of gelatine, without water. If the vessel containing the mixture is placed in a pot of boiling water it will not burn on the bottom or require much attention. In case any foreign substances are found in the mixture it will be well to strain it. When the mixture is cooling in the pan, which should be set level, any bubbles that may be noticed should be skimmed to one side, which can be done by means of a flat piece of paper. This latter may seem to be a small point, but it is an important one. When hektograph copies of typewritten matter are made it is necessary to use a special hektograph ribbon, which all dealers in machine supplies furnish, the usual price being one dollar each. The use of the hektograph is simple. When it is desired to use it wash the gelatinous pad with cold water, after which absorb all the moisture possible by means of blotting paper. Now lay the sheet written in hektograph ink on the face of the pad, carefully roll it down and let it remain until a good impression is taken—about

ten minutes will suffice—when it can be taken off and fifty to one hundred duplicates made by rolling fresh sheets on the surface of the pad. After using, wash the pad until the impression of the writing disappears. As a home-made article the hektograph has a place, though of course it does not compare in utility with some of the improved duplicators such as the mimeograph, neostyle, etc.

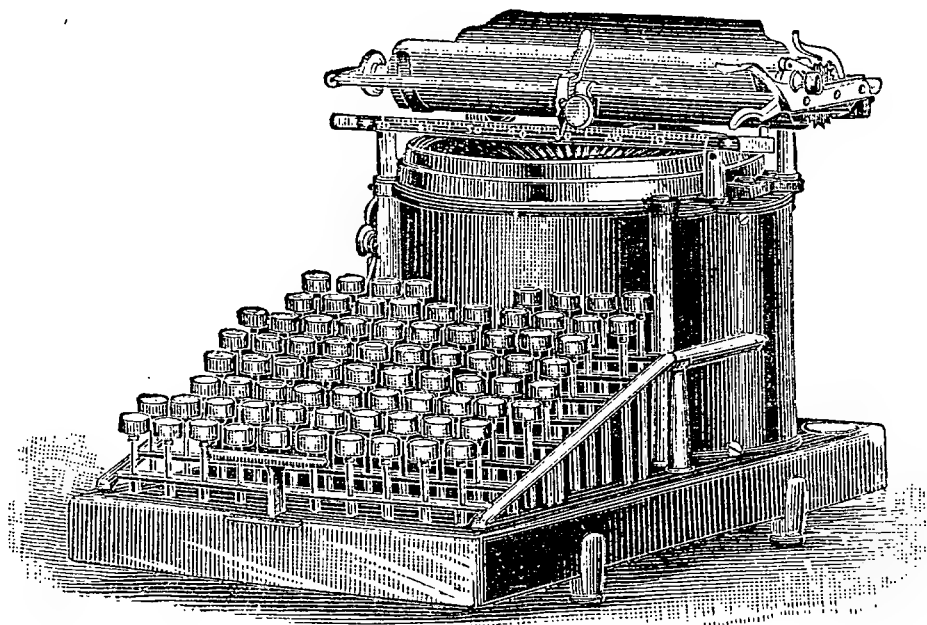
Taking down conversations, even if important matters are discussed, is difficult to do so as to please all hands, as the inaccuracies of speech, and the abrupt turning from one theme to another, make a verbatim report out of the question, if the reporter values his life. Then to “fix up” the sallies and counter-sallies so as to give the whole conversation an appearance of completeness and logical sequence, and yet preserve the naturalness of the report, is quite difficult. It is not improbable that a really excellent report that gives verbatim every important remark, and expunges all material foreign to the theme in hand—a report that the best judges would pronounce very good—may not suit the parties who did the talking at all. After a time, should the reporter be called upon to report the same parties a number of times, he can adapt his right ideas to their wrong ones, and thus make a pleasing report, for the absurdities of which he holds the other parties responsible. Of course this would be an exceptional case, and is only stated to show that a really excel-

lent report may not be appreciated at its full value ; also that a slavish clinging to verbatim transcriptions is not always advisable or safe. Even the Congressional Record does not at all times contain the exact words of a speaker who uses abusive or offensive language. In amanuensis work it is usually well, however, to put down the words as they have been uttered, except in case some grammatical mistake has been made. Do not fix up the copy of an editor or the dictation of a business man is sound advice for a compositor or shorthand writer to heed.

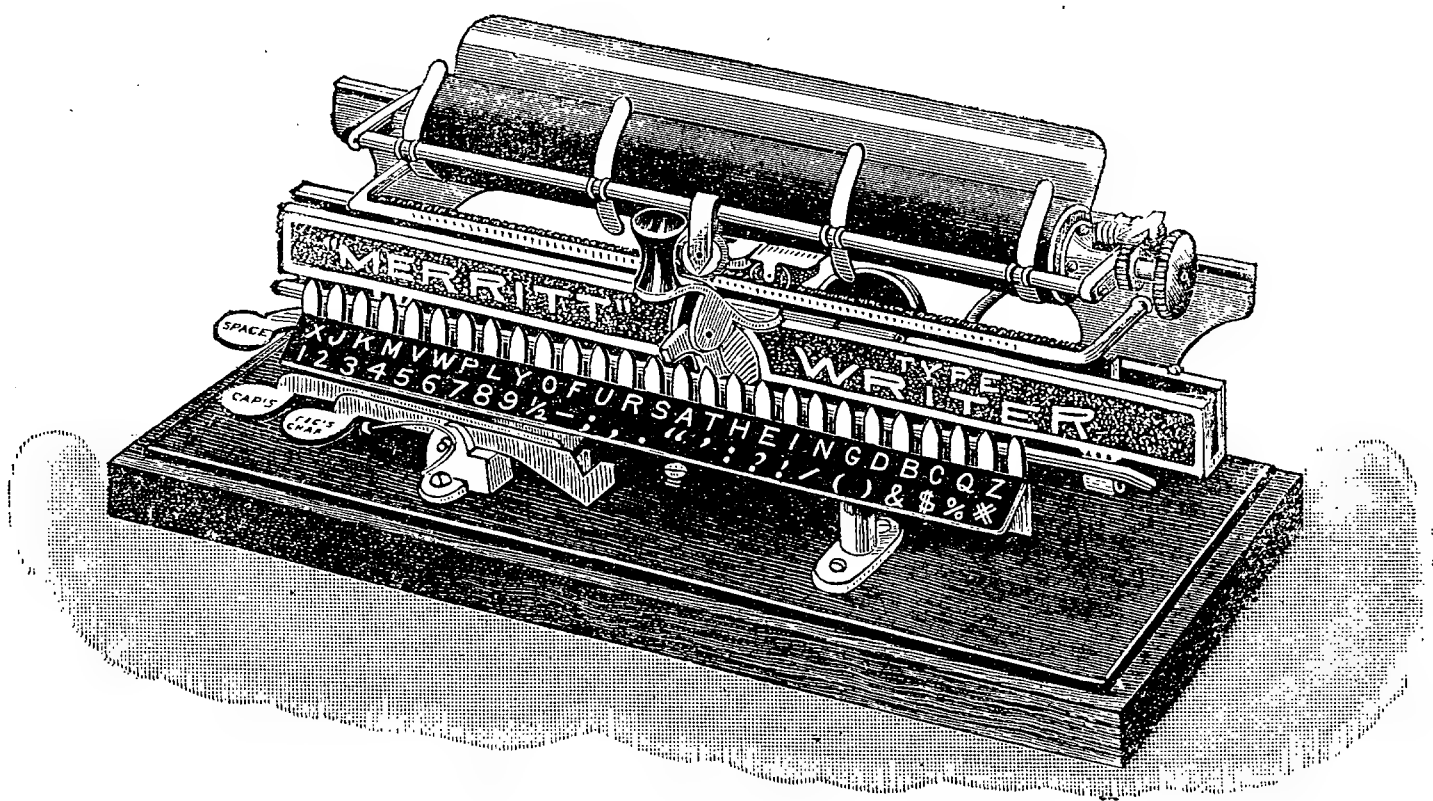
When using the typewriter for copying it will be found to be a good plan to insist on the mind not being lazy. Take a full line and copy it clear through, without referring to the manuscript until another line is wanted, and write at a uniform speed, neither pausing for commas or capitals. By working in this way a copyist can accomplish more than by starting off with three or four words at lightning speed, lifting the carriage to inspect the work, making an erasure, running back to reprint the erased letter, taking a few words more, and perhaps repeating the operation just described. There is such a thing as getting into the swing of writing, and perhaps every stenographer has found that his swift hand of Saturday evening had seemed to lose its cunning during the first hours of the following Monday morning. By chopping up the line into sections the copyist is unable to get the sense of the

matter being written, and it is this fact more than anything else that makes the copying of detached dates and names such tedious work. There is nothing tangible for the mind to grasp, and the whole rhythm of the labor is broken up and annihilated in the most tantalizing way. Take a full line or sentence in the mind, write it nearly through, and if you have adopted the writing by touch method you can be absorbing a new sentence while the hands are finishing up the old line ; but of course this would be asking a little too much in most cases, still, if it can be done, it results in the writer going more slowly at times but seldom coming to a full stop. Write the page clear through without lifting the carriage, then take sheet out and glance it over, and if a wrong letter has inadvertently crept in, it is the work of but a few moments to correct it, which can be done by reinserting the sheet in the machine, if desired.

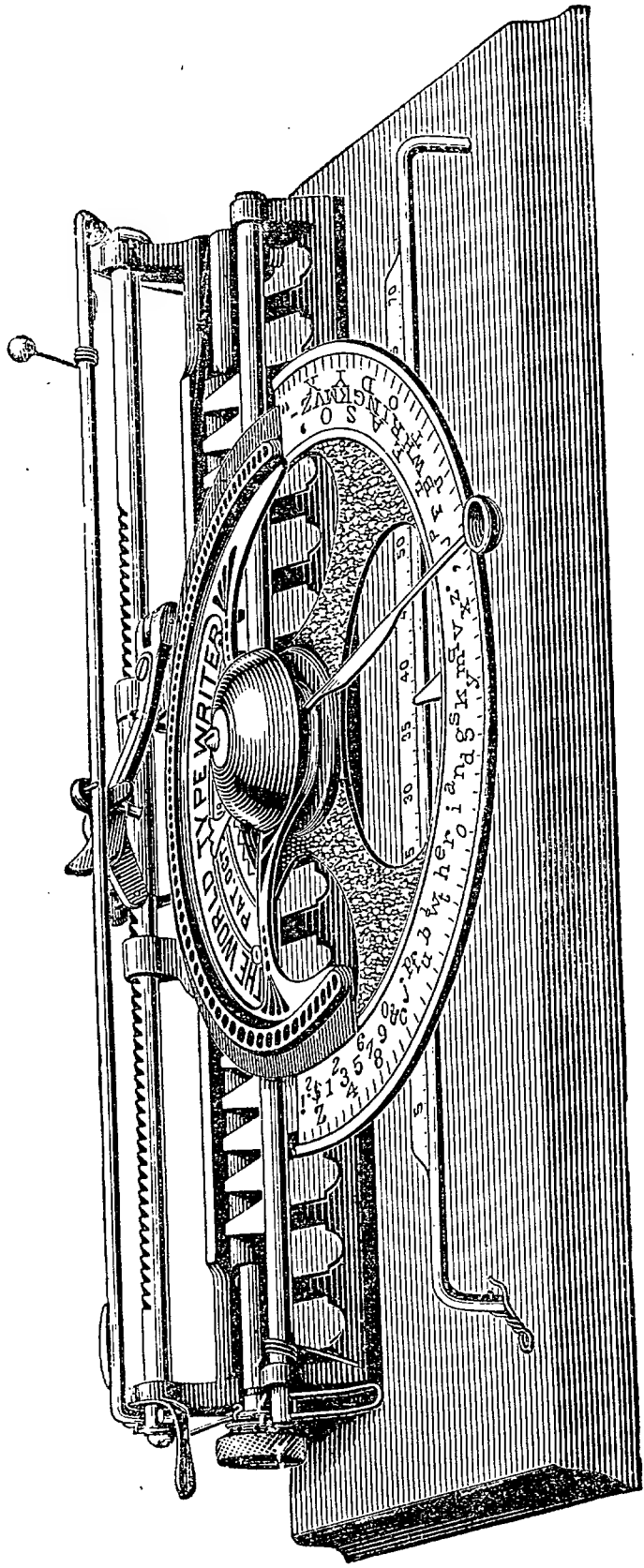
Every writer in the world, whether of shorthand or anything else, should use the muscular movement in writing, the acquirement of which is so easy. If any reader of these pages has not acquired the movement, or does not know what it is (many grown-up people who have been clear through school seem never to have heard of it) let him sit down at a table and watch himself write. If he finds himself writing without moving his wrist, he may class himself as a finger writer. To acquire the muscular movement



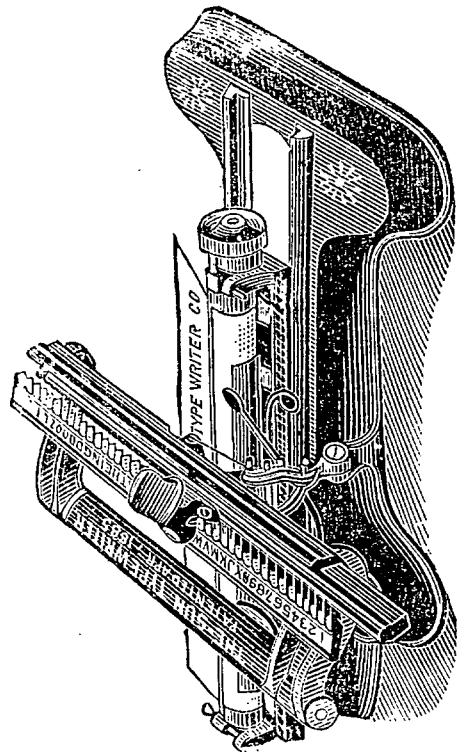
THE YOST TYPEWRITER.



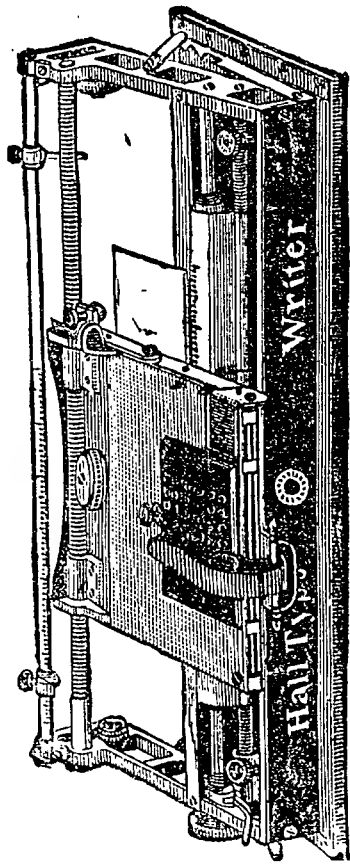
THE MERRITT TYPEWRITER.



THE WORLD TYPEWRITER.



THE SUN TYPEWRITER.



THE HALL TYPEWRITER

lay the arm on the table, with wrist about eight inches from the edge ; take pencil in hand, turn hand up slightly, resting on side of hand opposite thumb ; now move the whole hand on fleshy part of fore arm and you have the movement. All that is now necessary is to watch that you do not move the fingers by themselves at all when executing the main strokes, and but slightly at anytime. This muscular movement must not be confused with the whole-arm movement taught by writing masters, as it might really be called a flesh-arm movement. Make capital O rapidly, first from left to right, and then from right to left, with arm resting lightly on desk and you will soon see what the movement is. The finger-movement and the whole arm movement are very tiresome, but with the muscular movement you can write almost the entire day through without fatigue. It will not be necessary when writing in this way to clutch the pen with a strong grip, as it will be found much better to hold the handle loosely in the fingers. Caution : There is such a thing as moving the whole hand by means of the wrist, without bringing into play the muscular movement proper and the learner must not deceive himself. The subject is worthy of far more attention than it receives, and the early and constant use of the movement for all pen exercises whatsoever will prove a gold mine of benefit to the writer.

If your employer has a whim you might as well

respect it, if no principle is sacrificed in your doing so. You will thus prove that you are broad-gauge enough to do what you know to be silly, without wincing, and this will be a proof that you are master of yourself. This compliance in carrying out any freak ideas of your employers can be done without compromising yourself in the least. A boy was once told when he applied to a rich man for work that there was a heap of brick in the yard that he wanted removed to the other side of his premises, and he told the boy to set to work and carry the bricks one at a time to the new location and continue at it till the labor was done. After several days hard work the boy reported that the labor was completed and inquired what was to be done next. "Carry that brick pile back in the same way," was the reply. The boy started upon the foolish task without a murmur, for was he not earning money for his mother? But, as the story would have it, after the boy had carried about a dozen bricks back in obeying the second order, he was confronted by the eccentric millionaire, who, being convinced that the youth meant business, told him that he would educate and champion him in a financial way henceforth. Whether this tale is "apochryphal" or not, it may serve to "point a moral" that willing workers who are not anxious to question the sense of every order will in due time be rewarded, though they may be required to carry the metaphorical brick-pile a good many times; their immediate reward being that

they do not irritate the boss. As a rule, it is well for employees to do what they are told, though it will be understood that there is a wide difference between servile toadyism and cheerful obedience. Polite firmness, and a disposition to instantly resent an injustice, will earn respect ; but a querulous spirit and obstinate refusal to adapt himself to some trifling preference of his employer, may subject the stenographer to a well-earned discharge.

An important item to be noticed is the form used in typewritten letters. Several forms are allowable, and once in a while a business man indicates his wish to have his letters laid off in a certain way, in which case his plan should, of course, be adopted. Ordinarily a page of letter folio should be run in so that the date line will be written about an inch or an inch and a-half from the top of the page, commencing the writing of the date about half way across the sheet. Then drop two lines and write name of party addressed, beginning at 1 (or clear to the left of the sheet), drop two lines more to 10, and write address, drop two lines and again commence at 1, with "Dear Sir," or "Gentlemen," then drop two lines more and begin the letter proper at 10, as indicated on the machine scale. The formula is simply 1-10-1-10, dropping either one or two lines each time. Begin new paragraphs at 5 ; space once after comma, colon or semicolon, twice after period ; do not make new paragraph for "we remain," or

“and oblige” : and write “Yours truly,” or “Yours respectfully,” (or whatever form may be used), beginning a little to the right of the center of the page. In legal work, use the form provided, leaving ample margin to the left. Double space between lines as a rule, though in making abstract copies, or the like, single spacing is often preferred. If the letter is too long to be conveniently written on one sheet, it may be well to double line the first half of the page and single line towards the bottom of the sheet. But in any case, do not give the matter a crowded appearance, and leave plenty of room at the bottom for stamping name of firm or affixing signature, and even if the sense of the letter does not absolutely require it, it is best to make one paragraph on every page. Nothing more certainly indicates inexperience than the use of a faulty form in addressing envelopes or writing letters. Punctuation, capitalization and good form of writing letters do not properly belong to the study of phonography at all, but where the education has been neglected in these directions, any light thrown on any point should be welcome. Those deficient in these matters should buy one or more of the excellent little works giving full information along this line. By a little observation of the letters sent out from leading business houses, the points we have made can be impressed upon the mind, and perhaps varied slightly.

The following article contains exactly 450 words, which are numbered in divisions of twenty five words each. Besides being excellent advice, the article will be useful as a dictation exercise. Any one who can take the piece as new matter in five minutes and read his notes easily, need not hesitate to apply for an amanuensis position. Omit the figures in reading.

“DO IT WELL.”

“There is a world of philosophy in the words of the Kansas minister, who said : ‘I have been a far more useful man since the (25) Lord revealed to me that I was never to be a great man.’ There are some merchants whose own opinion that they are to be (50) great in the commercial world, is preventing them from being really useful, and attaining that degree of success to which their actual abilities would otherwise (75) entitle them. By keeping their imaginary greatness constantly before their eyes, they actually put themselves into such a condition as to effectually shut out the (100) possibility of real greatness. Whatever else may have contributed to it, we believe real greatness has never been attained, except by doing that which came (25) to hand in the best possible manner. And it is just that thing, that he who imagines himself to be great by destiny, fails to (50) do. Of course, it does not follow from this that all who diligently and quietly make the best possible use of their opportunities will become (75) great ; for greatness is

only relative, and all men cannot be great, any more than the entire surface of the earth can be composed of (200) mountain tops. But he who dismisses from his mind all idea of natural or predestined greatness, and simply devotes all of his powers to the (25) doing of that which comes to hand in the best possible manner, has the best possible chance of becoming great, and whether he becomes great (50) or not, will have the satisfaction of having done full justice to himself, while he who neglects the faithful performance of the duties of life (75) as they present themselves, because he imagines he was created for greater things, is sure to find himself left behind, and that the only person (300) in the world who places a high estimate upon him, is himself. We do not address these remarks to merchants because we think they may (25) profit by them more than others, for the principle applies equally well to all men, of course. But merchants, as well as others, need constantly (50) to remember, that he who over-estimates his ability deceives himself only.

“Of course, the opposite error of thinking oneself incapable of things which by (75) a little effort, may be easily accomplished, is to be avoided as well, and is undoubtedly best, upon the whole, to do very little thinking (400) about one's abilities, either to over- or under-estimate them, but simply to put forth the full strength to the doing of that which

seems (25) best to be done at the time, leaving the future to decide whether greatness shall or shall not be attained, and philosophically accepting the result." (50)

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